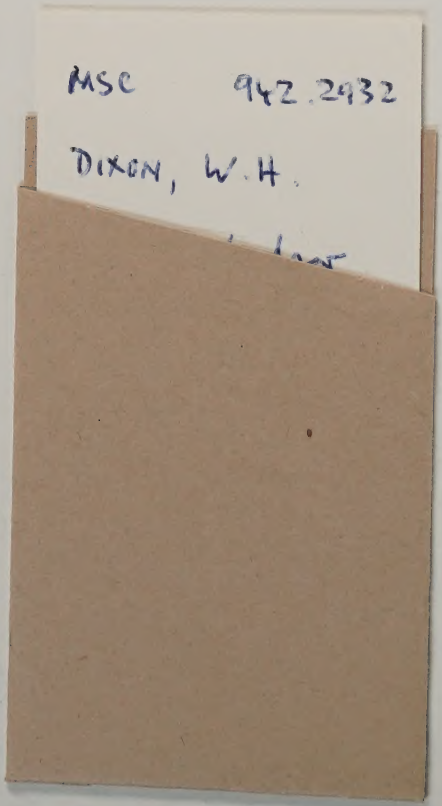
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ROYAL WINDSOR.

BY

WILLIAM HEPWORTH DIXON.

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13 GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

ROYAL WINDSOR.

VOL. III.

942.2932

ROYAL WINDSOR

BY

WILLIAM HEPWORTH DIXON

VOLUME III.

Third Edition.

LONDON:
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
13 GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
1880.

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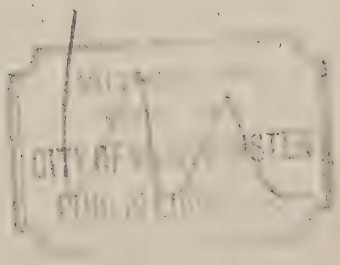

LONDON:
PRINTED BY STRANGEWAYS AND SONS,
Tower Street, Upper St. Martin's Lane.

NOTE.

On Friday, December the 26th, my father worked all day, and on into the evening, to finish revising the proofs of the third volume of *Royal Windsor*. The next morning, at half-past six, he died in his sleep.

What could be done by another hand has been done; but if any errors have crept into the text of the fourth volume, the blame rests with me.

ELLA HEPWORTH DIXON.

January, 1880.

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ROYAL WINDSOR.

CHAPTER I.

ST. GEORGE'S HALL.

1488.

On Saturday, March the twenty-ninth, Henry of Richmond, grandson of 'Kate, sweet Kate,' and Owen Tudor, her all-daring Master of the Wardrobe, cantered into the upper ward, and halting at the great gate of the King's house, entered the crypt of St. George's Hall.

Saturday was his 'lucky' day. A man of Celtic blood and of monastic training, Henry was inclined to look for signs, and note the hours of fortune. Like many exiles and adventurers, he had his star, and fancied that the planets in their courses waited on him, with their baneful and benignant lights. Even to himself his life was

charmed. The last day of the week had always proved for him the 'nick' of time. On a Saturday he had won the battle of Bosworth Field; and on a Saturday he had entered London and secured his crown. An act of no less moment than that robust fight, that splendid show, now brought him up from Shene to Windsor:—his intention being to place himself, his consort, and his son, under the direct protection of St. George. Hence he rode up to Windsor on his lucky day.

Entering by the great gate—then, as now, the principal way into the King's house—he strode into the vaulted crypt beneath St. George's Hall.

Crypt and hall, though separated from the King's house by open courts and a covered way, were parts of the great edifice built by Edward the Third. Among the pillars of the crypt stood figures of men in armour, holding up time-worn banners. On the floor lay culverins, catapults, and other spoils of war. A broad stair, facing the entrance, led him to an upper floor, where he emerged into a lofty guard-room, flanked by galleries on the east and west. More men in mail, more arms and banners, filled this chamber with the trophies of contested fields. Here Henry was at home in the heroic past. Corselets and

battle-axes, taken with the captives at Agincourt, hung below the standards captured at Neville's Cross. Everything in this guard-room spoke to the hero of successful war.

Turning to his left, he found himself in St. George's Hall. A roof of oak, raftered and panelled, was ablaze with gold and paint. A row of Gothic windows opened on the upper ward. On every wall and jamb he saw the shields of king and knight; among the rest, the shields of Edward of Windsor, John of Gaunt, Henry of Bolingbroke, and Harry of Agincourt.

Under the arms and banners of these princes, Henry, king of England, by the grace of heaven and by the people's choice, proposed to take his seat and hold his festival in St. George's Hall.

The greatest princes of his house had been devoted to the Windsor saint. Edward had struck the Genoese, Bolingbroke the Saracens, Monmouth the French, to one great slogan:—that of St. George of England! Yet no soldier of his line had been more loyal to the saint than Henry Tudor. Early and late, in cloister and in camp, St. George had been with him; guiding his steps, firing his hopes, and lighting him on his way. Never for a moment had he failed his patron.

Landing at Milford Haven, he had invoked his saint; marching into the midland shires, he had invoked his saint. English or Welsh, his followers had worn the cross and colours of St. George. At Bosworth he had spurred into battle with his war-cry, 'God and St. George!'

His favour had been no less signal than his service. From the condition of an exile he had been restored to his country; from the condition of a repudiated suitor he had been crowned with love; from the condition of a subject he had been raised to a throne. Crowned, wedded, heired: he owed these manifold blessings to the favour of his saint. The time had come for him to place his family under the immediate protection of St. George.

His family consisted of his wife, his mother, and his son.

At twenty-two, Elizabeth of York—the 'Lady Bessie' of old ballads—was a queen in her own right, no less than in her husband's right. The women of her house were all of shapely mould, and much of what was best in them appeared to have met in her. Bright, supple, fair, with sea-blue eyes and tawny locks, she looked the model of such angels as Italian masters then loved to

paint. Youth, fortune, love, attended on her steps; yet few princesses of her race had passed through so much tempest as Elizabeth of York.

At fifteen she was left an orphan with her widowed mother in the Sanctuary at Westminster. A tyrant occupied her brother's throne. That tyrant's guards stood round her lodgings, near enough for her to catch their ribald jests, and see the glitter of their pikes. Her brothers, Edward the Fifth and Richard of York, were taken from her side by violence, and butchered in the Tower. A similar doom appeared to wait on her. By promises and threats the tyrant got her mother to leave the Sanctuary. They had no money, and the monks were anxious to get rid of them as troublesome and perilous guests. One day a messenger came to tell Lady Bessie that her birth was spurious; that she was not her father's child; that she was to be given in marriage to a bastard like herself. In that dark moment, Father Christopher Urswick came to her from the young Lancastrian prince, not only with a message of cheer and comfort, but with offers of his hand and heart.

The 'pretty boy' of Shakespere's play had been contracted to Lady Bessie by her father.

Older by ten years than herself, a pale and handsome lad, with something of a scholar's grace edging and softening the soldier's fire, the prince had taken her girlish fancy, and had filled the chambers of her mind. From that time she had thought herself his wife. Although her father changed his projects, and began to look elsewhere, she kept his image in her heart. Richmond, on his side, finding her father playing fast and loose with him, formed other ties. Had he been left alone, Maud Herbert, not Lady Bessie, might have been his consort; but events were working for them, and she never let his memory go. In vain they promised her to the Dauphin, called her Dauphiness, and magnified the crown of France. With Richmond reigning in her heart, she was as cold to Charles the Dauphin as she was afterwards impatient with the bastard boy. When Father Christopher brought his message from the prince, all the old fire leapt out. Answering his love with favour, she renewed her vow, and gave him pledge for pledge.

Yet many a day of suffering passed between her pledge and victory. She was separated from her mother, shut up in a lonely room, and pestered by the tyrant's suit. Richard conceived the plan

of forcing her into an incestuous marriage. Priests and citizens threatened to resist that project. Forced to give up his schemes, he sent her to Sheriff Hutton, a stronghold in the north, where he kept her prisoner, lodged near her cousin Edward, son of that brother George of Clarence whom he had drowned in the butt of wine.

False news was sent by Richard to the prince that Bessie had given her hand to another. Christopher crossed the sea. Stealing up north, he found her at Sheriff Hutton, in her own room, under guard, but free from any other pledge than she had given. Instead of yielding to another's suit, she was beseeching heaven for his success. More to deliver her from bondage than to win a crown, he started on his enterprise; counting, like Bolingbroke, rather on his rival's weakness than his own material strength. On landing he was told more lies — that he was all too late; that Lady Bessie was another man's wife. He pushed on rapidly, striking for the midland counties, where he met his enemy and won his bride.

The king's mother, Margaret of Richmond, had no youth, no beauty, to engage the eye. Her wan and troubled face rested on a bent and broken frame. Picture and victim of the civil war, she

looked, like many other wrecks around her, wasted in the fire and withered by the storm. Somerset, her father, plucked that red rose in the Temple garden, with his cry :

> 'Let him that is no coward and no flatterer,
> But dare maintain the party of the truth,
> Pluck a red rose with me.'

Somerset stood against Plantagenet, each in his own person representing a branch of the royal house. No one suffered more in that 'contention' than Lady Margaret. The duke, her father, perished in the cause. The second duke, her uncle, fell at St. Albans ; and his son, her cousin Henry, lost his life. Edmund, fourth duke — the last male issue of Catharine de Roet by John of Lancaster—perished on the block. Not one male Beaufort now remained alive, and only one Plantagenet male was left alive. Except in Margaret and her son the blood of John of Gaunt was now extinct.

In her own person she had tasted grief. State policy forced her into wedlock with Edmund Tudor, who left her in her sixteenth year a widow with an infant son no more than four months old. But for that child she would have gone into a cloister. Having to think of him no less than of

herself, she kept her place at court, but vowed to lead a celibate life. To shield her child she took a mate in Stafford, son of the great duke of Buckingham, but was his wife in nothing save the name. When Stafford died, she sought a new protector for her boy in Stanley, then an aged peer with grown-up sons. Margaret selected husbands as she might have selected guardians, out of policy. Stanley was an officer in the tyrant's household, and as Stanley's consort she was governess to Lady Bessie; in which position she not only acted for her son with Bessie, but prepared the great defection of her husband's troops on Bosworth Field.

Stanley was created earl of Derby, but his consort neither bore his name nor lived beneath his roof. Her life was one of penance. Never had sister of St. Clare put down the flesh with a severer spirit than Lady Margaret. She spent her days in fasting and her nights in prayer. One earthly love she cherished, and that love she lavished on her son. For him she plotted, married, and intrigued. For him she was prepared to give up everything. When his son Arthur came into the world, she sacrificed state and splendour to become a nurse. With Arthur in her arms, she waited for the day on which three generations of

the Tudor family should be dedicated to St. George.

Since the great victory of Bosworth Field, two of the patron's days had passed without his majesty being able to perform his rites at Windsor. Both days he had been afield, contending for his crown.

The first was Lovel's year.

Galled by the king's success, not only in the field, but in the bower, Lovel, a Yorkist peer, took arms in favour of John de la Pole, whom he regarded as the legal heir. A son of Alice Chaucer having married a sister of Richard the Third, the eldest born of that alliance was created earl of Lincoln, and adopted by the tyrant as heir-presumptive to the crown :—cutting off Elizabeth of York. A servile parliament endorsed that act; so that, according to Lovel, Lincoln was heir by law, even if Elizabeth claimed the crown by birth. On Henry's appearance near the rebel camp, 'Lovel, our dog,' bolted in the night, leaving his bands to scatter through the shires. Lincoln was too prudent to appear.

Though fortunate in the field, the victor lost all chance of holding his first festival in St. George's Hall.

The next was Simnel's year.

Returning to his bark and snap, Lovel appeared once more in a rebel camp; but the whole gravity of that second rising lay in the adhesion of Lincoln and the Geraldines. Simnel assumed the name of Edward, son of Clarence; and Lincoln's approval of his claims appeared to stamp them as those of truth and law. One of the Irish Geraldines was lord deputy, another lord chancellor. They crowned the young impostor, and the chancellor crossed the sea wih five or six thousand kernes, while the lord deputy, his brother, ruled the island under Simnel's patent. Landing at Morecombe Bay, these rebels crossed into the midland shires, where part of the royal troops fell on them, and destroyed them at a blow. Lincoln died like a soldier, leaving his 'legal' claims to his brother, Edmund de la Pole. Lovel sneaked away, and hiding himself in a hole was starved to death. Simnel, confessing his imposture, was remitted to the king's kitchen, where he turned the spit and served out jugs of ale.

Though fortunate again, the victor had lost all chance of holding his second festival in St. George's Hall.

The third year found his realm at peace. Not

only were his arms victorious, but the birth of his son Arthur filled him with the hope of a pacific reign and the transmission of his sceptre to a line of kings.

In honour of his wife and child, he caused two decorations to be made,—a collar and a badge: not only to be worn that day, but on all festivals in times to come. The collar was of gold, with roses interlaced; a red rose with a white, a white rose with a red. The badge he called a George; in witness of the rites by which he was to place himself and his successors under the protection of his patron saint.

His festival was conducted with amazing pomp. Langton, the chancellor, feasted his spiritual brethren in Salisbury tower; Bourchier, the new Constable, held revels in the Norman keep. Every one at Windsor stood in his best array; the men in velvet and cloth of gold, the women in brocade and lace. Every one in search of fortune flocked to the royal mount; from primate Morton, looking for a cardinal's hat, to poet Skelton, thirsting for a laureate's jar of wine.

Mounting at his great gate, Henry rode through the South porte, and prancing over Castle hill,

turned into the lower ward, followed by his knights. Next came the queen and Lady Margaret, in a coach drawn by six horses harnessed in the trappings of St. George. After them rode the queen's sister, Lady Anne, mounted on a white palfrey covered with white roses. Envoys, bishops, peers, and citizens followed, hailed at each turn by peal of song, by blast of horn, by roar of cannon. Mass and chorus followed in St. George's choir, banquet and diversion in St. George's Hall.

No braver festival had ever lighted up the saintly chapel and the royal house.

CHAPTER II.

THE TUDOR TOWER.

1495–9.

Once settled near their saint, the king and queen grew more and more attached to Windsor. Here, in the majesty of death, rested the ashes of both Lancaster and York; a few feet only separating the tombs of Henry the Sixth and Edward the Fourth. St. George's chapel was the sign of unity in death; the King's house was the sign of unity in life. When the queen dowager, Elizabeth Woodville, died, she selected Windsor as her resting place. One grave contained the queen's parents. Thus, the hill grew dear to the royal pair through many ties.

Henry conceived a plan for building on that hill a new house—on a pattern of his own; for hollowing out a grave—also, on a pattern of his own; so that, in years to come, the palace and the mauso-

leum of his race should stand within the sanctuary of his saint. In no long time these structures were in hand; new works, of a new model; evidence to the outer sense, not only of another reign, but of another age.

Bray was employed to build his palace, Estrefield to prepare his tomb. These artists were his friends and comrades. Painters like Reynolds, architects like Bray, and carvers like Estrefield, found easier access to his presence than courtly chamberlains and secretaries of state. An excellent judge of men, he knew what every one was worth. A dozen chamberlains as smooth as Arundel, a dozen secretaries as close as Fox, were to be found at court. But where, in either court or city, could he find a second Reginald Bray?

Yet Henry meant to help these artists with ideas and suggestions; acting as his own master of the works, very much as he acted in all other spheres of labour; in the council-room as his own prime minister, in the cabinet as his own secretary of state. He had no favourite—except his wife,—and nearly all his business was conducted under his own eyes and hands. In what was to be done, his were the principles to be carried out. That Henry was an architect, his palace at Green-

wich proved; his chapel at Westminster proves; an architect, who was not content with piling up pyramids of stone; but an original thinker, who expressed in wall and roof, in groin and window, the ideas of his age and the affections of his heart.

The tower to which he left his name, in the upper ward, was but the fragment of a great design; yet, slight as the Tudor tower may seem when set against such piles of masonry as Curfew tower and Salisbury tower, no portion of the King's house stamped so faithfully the genius of its builder and the spirit of his reign. It was at once a record, and a proclamation. It announced that the feudal age was past, that the domestic age had come.

Starting from the northern front, his edifice overlooked the river and the distant heights. Jutting from the line of wall, his windows opened to the sun, free of all shadow from adjacent towers. To east and west, his view ran clear, covering the loveliest bends and reaches of the stream. No standpoint, save the Keep, took in so wide a range; and from the Keep, such bits of landscape as the slopes and deer-course were not visible. All objects on the northern front were seen from Henry's tower. Yet the original mark was not the choice of site. The magic was the style; a frame of

stone-work, equally new and striking; to be recognised in later ages as a perfect outcome of the English soil. The mark of this new style—so well adapted to a grey and sullen region—was, that the building opened to the sky and made a festival of light.

Poet never dreamed, and architect never raised, a happier palace for St. George. Look at this tower in Norden's map, before the lines were tamed, and the windows darkened, by a later hand. A sombre length of front was pierced by a single opening in the wall; a frowning feudal battlement was lighted by one radiant shaft. That opening was a stair; an undefended passage, rising from a garden-slope into the upper ward. That radiant shaft, more glass than masonry, softened the fortalice by hints of household life within. By the addition of that tower, the castle seemed to have been breached—laid open to the sunshine and the air of heaven.

That stair, ascending from the slope into the upper ward, was called the Private stair, and was intended for domestic use. A pathway led from it to the Little park, and, by the deer-course, to the ferry-boats.

This structure was the king himself; his mind, his fortune, and his reign.

At thirty-five, Henry was a white, worn man, of middle height and slender frame, looking, in his spareness, taller than his inches, and in his paleness, older than his years. Care ploughed her lines across his brow and ate her hollows in his cheek. Alert and eager as he seemed, he had never been robust; and he was now in feeble health, coveting the tranquillities of an indoor life. Having lived afield, he liked free space and light; but there was little in him to announce the man of camps. A stranger, meeting him alone, might have mistaken him for an artist or a clerk. In aspect he was rather French than English, having a thin and shaven face, instead of a rosy cheek and hirsute chin. Kate seemed to have come back to earth in him. Her eyes were his; two restless and mercurial orbs; not sea-blue, like the other princes of his house, but dark and mystical, with the glamour of a Celtic race. If need were, he could strike, but he preferred to gain his objects by pacific arts.

Example: in connexion with St. George:

One of his motives for making his first festival at Windsor a great affair, was the existence in his

kingdom of a second brotherhood of St. George, which he intended to suppress.

The Order of St. George was a prerogative of his crown ; but in the troubled period of the war, this property in the saint had been invaded by the Geraldines. Asking no license from the king, these chiefs had started an Irish branch ; the knights of which had not only sworn allegiance to Simnel, but had crossed the Channel and fought against their prince at Stoke. One kingdom could not hold two orders of St. George, and Henry saw good reason for suppressing his Irish branch. But he was soft and secret in his ways. An order to suppress the knights might possibly sting them into arms. He sent for them to court. They came in fear, not knowing what excuse to make for having put the crown on Simnel's head. He met them with a smile :

'My lords, the next time you will crown an ape.'

Inviting them to dine, he treated them to a second pleasantry. While they sat at meat, an officer stepped into the dining-hall and cried in a loud voice :

'My lords, your new king, Lambert Simnel, drinks to you.'

Simnel, dressed as a butler's page, came in, bearing a cup of wine. Striding to the Irish deputy, he looked him in the face, tasted the wine, and offered him the cup to drink.

'Would the great devil in hell had seized thee ere I saw thy face!' roared the deputy, waving back the cup.

'Hi, hi!' laughed Howth, a 'merry gentleman,' who had made his peace by giving up his friends: 'bring me the cup.' Simnel turned round and handed him the wine. Glancing at his Irish comrades, Howth said merrily: 'If the wine be good, I shall drink it for the wine's sake, and for my own.' After his draught, he tossed the cup to Simnel, saying: 'As for thee, I leave thee as thou art, poor innocent!'

The Irish knights returned to Dublin, leaving 'their king,' to pour out wine for other guests. Happy to escape so easily, they dissolved the Irish branch by vote in the ensuing parliament, and Windsor had henceforth no rival in St. George.

Henry's new tower was, like himself, a product and expression of the time.

On Bosworth Field, the feudal tyrant and the feudal system fell. The hour had come, the blow was struck. Down to the earth rolled feudal king

and feudal age. A brighter day was nigh; yet who perceived how great a change had come? In all the cries which hailed the victor, people heard no more than that York was gone and Lancaster in his place. What else lay hidden in those cries, the future only could disclose. So, too, with the fallen king. Naked and foul with mire, his body had been flung across a charger, and conveyed to Leicester, where a hole was dug and the carcase tumbled in. Dirges were sung by mendicant monks and nuns above that vanquished prince. But no man heard, in that low wail, the voices of a final generation of English monks and nuns. Yet these things were, and were to be. Day was dawning on that feudal grave; dawning into Caxton, into Tyndal, into Ascham, into Surrey. Some of the Poor Clares who sang that dirge over Richard's corpse were to outlive the order which had given them their name and place.

Leaving Edward the Third's pile intact, Henry threw out his wing towards the Norman tower; erecting on the ridge three tiers of chambers; which he connected—on the south side, by a covered passage and a 'secret room,' with the queen's apartments—on the east side, with the state rooms and galleries: a veritable house of light!

His tower, his covered passage, and his secret room, were finished; but events ran faster than his architects. Arthur, his heir apparent, died at Ludlow, and was buried at Worcester. Margaret, his pearl of pearls, was given in marriage to the king of Scots, in view of an eventual union of the crowns. His pet, Elizabeth, died in Westminster; and being a child, was laid in the Abbey, near the room in which she died. The queen soon followed her; dying with an entreaty on her lip that she might rest in death beside the infant princess who had borne her name. After these losses, Henry was a lonely man; after these interments, he abandoned his design of raising a mausoleum for his dynasty on the royal mount.

What Windsor lost Westminster was to gain.

His tower, his covered passage, and his secret room remained; to be, in after days, the scene of his comedy with Don Philip; a Satanic game in which the stake was Edmund de la Pole, brother of that 'legal' heir who had fallen on the field at Stoke.

CHAPTER III.

A WINDSOR COMEDY.

1506.

The curtain rose on the afternoon of our Lady's Eve.

It was a sacred season, and the priests of Our Lady of Windsor, commonly called the White Virgin, were expecting every one in the Castle to be kneeling at her feet and laying his noble on her shrine. But the king, though strict in his devotions, had no thought of going to prayers. Instead of wending to Our Lady's altar with his beads and offerings, he was girding on his sword and pulling down his cap.

Mounting at the great gate, he rode across the bridge and out into the park; heralds and trumpeters in his front; steward, constable, chamberlain, closing up behind; followed by a train of knights and gentlemen so long, that his majesty

might have been facing an invader in his park. But he was sallying out in state, not to confront an enemy, so much as to impress a man who had been cast by tempests on his shores. Guided by his star, he chose to have that meeting with the stranger on his lucky day.

The stranger was Don Philip, called the Fair; a fat young person, restless, timid, and scant of breath; yet precious in men's eyes as count of Flanders, duke of Burgundy, archduke of Austria, and king-consort of Castile. Henry had an eye for form, but he was hardly riding out that afternoon, leaving the fire-logs crackling on his hearth, to get an earlier glimpse of this young man's face. A deeper purpose drove him forth; and no one knew what course his game might take. It might be comic, and it might be tragic; for his course would turn on what the young man was prepared to say and sign.

Eight days before Our Lady's Eve, a country lad came galloping into Windsor with a message for the king. Sent by his master from Melcombe to Windsor, he reported that a fleet of ships had been wrecked in the Channel, and that some of the vessels had been driven disabled into Melcombe Roads. One of these vessels had on board

Don Philip, archduke of Austria, and his wife Juaña, queen of Castile. That vessel lay in port, unfit to sail. Not only had her guns gone over, but her masts had snapped, and her tackle had been cut adrift. Thrice she had been on fire, and more than once her gunwale had been under water. She was nothing but a wreck. Their highnesses, on landing at the mole, had been invited to his master's house. Drenched, sick, and frightened, they had taken him at his word, and they were living beneath his roof. His master wanted orders. What was he to do with his illustrious guests?

Never had the king received more welcome news. For months he had been striving to get a word in person with Don Philip, but the Austrian prince had always put him off. Stron reasons urged him to see Don Philip, who, in turn, had reasons no less weighty for trying to evade an interview. Neither Cæsar nor his son had recognised the Tudor king. To Philip, Henry was duke of Lancaster. Don Philip's court had been a centre of intrigues against the Tudor race. Lincoln and Lovel, Simnel and Warbeck, had found in his camp their place of arms. Deep wounds had been inflicted, and the king, besides these injuries

of the past, was anxious to regain a fugitive and to secure a match.

His fugitive was Edmund de la Pole, the Rose of York; his match was an alliance of his daughter, Lady Mary, with Don Carlos, prince of Spain. Pole was Don Philip's prisoner, Carlos was Don Philip's son.

Philip and Juaña were sailing down the Channel on their way to Spain, feasting and dancing, beating big drums and firing heavy guns, in mockery of the English fleets and coasts, when that gale sprang up which had driven their ships to east and west, and finally hurled them into Melcombe Roads.

A conference with the Austrian prince was now assured; the time and place of parley were in Henry's choice. What place so good as Windsor Castle? Philip had been rash enough to taunt the Tudor king with being a rebel and usurper. Under the shadow of King John's tower, he might be taught to lower that tone. But he might need to be partly coaxed and partly scared; for either purpose, Windsor, with her Tudor tower and Norman keep, was a 'convenient place.'

Messengers spurred from Windsor to the coast; one rider bearing kind words from Henry to his

royal visitors ; a second, carrying orders for three hundred men to gallop down from Arundel to Melcombe as a body-guard ; while a third, sweeping through the uplands, was to beat up the knights and gentlemen from the adjacent combes. In forty-eight hours Don Philip was enveloped in a swarm of horse.

Though treated like a prince, he was a captive, and he wanted to escape. Drawing his minister, La Chau, aside, he asked him whether they should not try to steal away. Many of his ships were lost, but he had still enough for flight, if he were once on board. He knew his host. Unless he fled, Henry was certain to insist on having Pole, and heaven knew what besides. La Chau considered. He and his master were in Henry's power. To fly from Melcombe was beyond their means. They had no horses of their own. The roads were long, the English riders fleet. Even if they reached a port, their vessels were unfit to sail. Much help was needed for repairs, which help was only to be got as favour from the English dockyards. An attempt at flight would bring the royal forces on their backs, and, being overtaken on the road, they might be treated as invaders of the soil. La Chau was dead against

attempts to fly. What then, Don Philip asked, were they to do? Keep civil tongues and trust the Tudor prince? They had not earned his favour; but La Chau, a subtle and persuasive minister, imagined that by treating Henry well, they would make the best of their unlucky plight.

Henry, though he talked of visiting his guests, remained at Windsor. Day followed day, till, fretted by his fears and doubts, Philip proposed to take La Chau, ride up to Windsor, and pay his majesty a visit—as an act of confidence. La Chau approved, and Henry was informed of his design. Nothing suited him so well, if only he could see the king-archduke alone. Juaña, not so timid as her lord, might interpose. She might be coaxed, but was unlikely to be scared. His schemes required that he should separate man and wife. This was adroitly done. He sent a hobby from the royal stable for his 'son,' Don Philip; a litter from the royal wardrobe for his 'daughter,' queen Juaña. Arundel was ordered to escort Don Philip thirty miles on his road; then gallop back as escort for Juaña, whom he was to lead, by slower marches and by different roads, to Shene.

One mile from the Castle bridge, Don Philip

met the king. Now came his moment of suspense; the time for him to mind his steps and choose his words. That Henry could be soft of look while he was hard of purpose, Philip was well aware. The Austrian halted; and the English horsemen, wheeling to right and left, opened an avenue between host and guest. Henry pricked up; Don Philip doffed his cap. Henry uncapped and smiled. Don Philip smiled in turn, lowering his forehead to his horse's mane. Henry saluted, and the trumpeters blew their horns. Philip saluted, and the trumpeters renewed their blast. Then the two kings embraced, and Henry, 'with a loving countenance,' bade his guest right welcome to his realm. Philip expressed his thanks: first, for the cheer he had enjoyed at Melcombe; afterwards, for the king's courtesy in coming out so far. More dips, more smiles; and then his majesty, chilled with cold, swung round, and taking Philip on his left, gave orders for the cavalcade to march.

Minstrels were stationed near the bridge and by the Devil's tower, to welcome their approach. Don Philip was in mortal dread. Above him frowned that Devil's tower in which a king of Scots had pined away his youth. James, like

himself, had been given into captivity by the sea. Was he, like James, to spend nine years of youth behind that iron grate ?

Crossing the upper ward, they halted at the great gate, over which fell the evening shadow of King John's tower. Don Philip offered to dismount before the king, but Henry, pulling up his gelding, stopped him by a sign. Kings and equals, they must touch the ground together ; yet the young man showed his wisdom by alighting one step before his host. This was no time, no place, for thinking of Henry Tudor as duke of Lancaster.

Entering the crypt, the two kings walked between the shafts and up the stair into the guard-room, where the king observed that his visitor stood uncapped, gazing on the spoils of war. He made a sign, but Philip held his cap. Henry took off his own ; Don Philip bowed and waited ; but his majesty, bending still lower, refused to move till Philip raised his cap. Bending and scraping to each other, their majesties turned into the state apartments.

In the first room they left the knights ; in the second room they left the lords and bannerets ; in a third room, hung with tapestry, they left the

bishops, earls, and chamberlains. On coming to the Tudor tower, his majesty remarked :

'These are your grace's lodgings ; these chambers and these servants are your own.'

Henry shook hands with La Chau ; on which Philip shook hands with Dorset.

'The next room is your grace's bedroom,' said his majesty, pointing to the Tudor tower.

Cap in hand, Don Philip prayed his host to go no farther : 'Your majesty has already done me too much grace.'

'No, no ; my house is honoured by your presence,' returned the English king : 'you are as welcome to me as a son, and I would have you feel as in your father's house.'

More bows, more smiles, more capping and uncapping followed. When his majesty turned to go, he said to Philip in his blandest tone :

'Now, son, ye shall to dinner, or to shift, as ye see fit.'

But Philip craved his license to attend him to his lodging. Not a word from that man's lips escaped his majesty. 'Well, well,' he said, 'so good a son deserves to have his way.'

Walking back through the ranks of bishops, lords, and knights, the two kings turned by the

gallery towards the queen's apartments, in which the host now lodged. The Tudor tower was Henry's cabinet; but he had given it up to Philip's use :—with an idea which he instantly translated into fact.

Leaving his attendants in the dining-hall, he drew his 'son' into that closet which was known to chamberlains and ushers as the king's 'secret room.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE SECRET ROOM.

1506.

With look of the deepest trust, his majesty explained to Don Philip that their sleeping-rooms, though seemingly far apart, lay near each other—near as a king's apartment should be to the queen's.

A door in the queen's cabinet opened into his secret room, from which a covered passage led to the Tudor tower. The door of this covered passage was concealed by tapestry; and no man, save a royal usher, was allowed to pass that way. To show his confidence in his 'son,' Henry took Don Philip by the hand, drew back the tapestry, and led him by the covered lobby to his own apartments in the Tudor tower.

Served by their own cooks and pages, host and visitor dined apart. Few princes in that period

dared to taste each other's food. Sitting for the first time under a Tudor roof, Philip was too timid to drink his wine from a duke of Lancaster's cup. Yet, so far, he had come off better than he had dared to hope. Though lodged in Windsor, he was treated like a king. Henry called him 'son;' gave up to him his own lodging; showed him the covered ways about his house. Still, as he sat alone, the query came to him, whether all these courtesies might not mask some sinister design? By similar courtesies, his father, Maximilian, had laid hands on Edmund de la Pole; by similar courtesies, his wife's father, Fernando, had entrapped Cesare Borgia. Such things were of the day. Was Henry of higher chivalry than Cæsar and the king of Aragon? Don Philip fancied not. Like other kings, he had been known to smile, and murder while he smiled. There was the case, well known to Philip, of Edward, earl of Warwick. Henry, smiling on the boy, had sent him to the Tower; and when his policy had urged the sacrifice, he had given his prisoner to the block. What evil scheme, then, lurked beneath those Tudor smiles? Philip was vain, but not so vain as to imagine, that an old man could have fallen in love, like a flower-girl, with

his rosy cheek. He drank more wine. Why had the king shown him through that secret room? To what intent had he discovered to him that covered passage in the wall? All palaces have their secrets; but a guest is rarely introduced to those mysterious walks. What was the price he might be asked to pay for all those bows and smiles?

Flustered by his wine, and fretted by his fears, Don Philip rose, and, calling for a torch, he felt his way towards the covered passage and the secret room. Had he been forced to go the longer round—threading the galleries and passing the men on guard—he might have paused. But Henry had taught him how to come and go unseen. Unless the king intended him to come, why had he been shown that covered way?

An usher stopped him at the door. No orders had been given, and no one save the king could give him leave to pass.

Henry, sitting in his cabinet, heard a sound behind the arras. Turning his key, he found four or five persons in the narrow lobby, with a torch; one man pushing forward, noisily; another trying to hush him, and to hold him back. His majesty listened:

'Let me go in, and give his highness warning, urged the faithful usher.

'No, no, I will warn the king myself. I will go first. No one but myself shall warn the king,' returned a voice, which Henry knew as that of Don Philip. Staying his servant with a word, he bade his 'son' come in. The door was locked, the arras drawn. The two men were alone.

Deep into the night they sat. 'A sign of love,' whispered one of the lords outside; but no man caught a word of what was said between the kings. Their lords-in-waiting guessed. Yet what was said that night, in that secret room, we know; for, nine days afterwards, the matter of their speech was written down and signed.

Henry, now a widower, felt less secure against Yorkist plots than while Elizabeth of York had shared his throne. Pole was the man towards whom all discontented persons turned. In earlier times, Henry had tried to win him; but his favours had been planted in a barren soil. Pole, in his petulance, had killed a man, and Henry had allowed him to escape the penalty of his crime. Pole had demanded titles and estates; and Henry had not only made him earl, and knight of the Garter, but enriched him with his brother's manors.

Forgetting all these graces, Pole had quitted the English court, and carried his claims as a pretender into foreign camps. In France, in Spain, in Austria, he had made himself a centre of intrigue; and, backed by promises of foreign aid, had stirred up discontent in every Yorkist shire.

That man was in Don Philip's power: in name, a guest; in fact, a prisoner. Would he not give up that exile to a king who 'loved him like a son?'

When they came out into the covered passage, Henry was observed to smile. The hour was late; yet he proposed to see his visitor back to his cabinet. No; the young man insisted; 'in no wise' should his majesty go so far. Then, in the covered passage, seen by five or six courtiers only, the negotiators parted for the night; Don Philip stealing to his tower, and Henry gliding back into his secret room.

Next day, the comedy went on. Philip heard mass in his own cabinet. Our Lady's Day being one of the greatest festivals of the Windsor year, Henry attended mass in state. Stafford bore the sword; Fitz-James served the altar in high pontificals. The service ended, Henry turned through St. George's hall, the guard-room, and the galleries towards the Tudor tower. Pages ran forward to

announce his visit, on which Don Philip came out to meet his majesty. In the second chamber, where the lords and bannerets stood, they met. Philip uncapped, bowed low, and bade the king good day. Some of the stiffness of their meeting seemed to have already flown.

'I could not sit down to dinner without first bidding your grace good-day,' said Henry, with a glozing smile. Philip, charmed by his host, moved back towards his dining-room. Henry strode up to the fire, and warmed his hands, while chatting with his guest, as father might with son. Who could have fancied they were ready to cut each other's throat? Don Philip waited on his host to the public stair, and wanted to go farther, but his majesty stayed him by a sign. Then Philip bowed, and said:

'I see right well that I must needs do as ye will.'

Again they dined apart. The king was gaining on his guest, but he had not yet won his trust so far as to invite that guest to share his meat and wine. After dinner, he sent to ask whether his 'son' would like to come into his room, and see the ladies dance?

Gladly, replied his guest; on which the king

came out to meet him, not by the covered way, but by the gallery. Henry offered him his arm. Philip drew back in courtesy: that honour was too much. The king insisted, and the young man took his arm. Who could resist so fatherly a king? Arm in arm, they passed through the suite of rooms, followed by the English and the Spanish lords, into the queen's apartments. There the lords hung back, while Henry and his guest passed on into the secret room, where they found Juaña's sister, Catharine, widow of Arthur prince of Wales, and the king's daughter, Lady Mary, bride-elect of Juaña's son. Philip kissed the princesses, and after spending some time in compliments, they all came back into the dining-hall, where the young ladies had more room to dance. Catharine took out a Spanish lady, Mary an English lady. 'Will your highness dance?' asked Catharine of her brother-in-law. Don Philip laughed, and Catharine teased him to take a turn. He put her off:

'I am a mariner, and you would have me dance!'

Lady Mary played the lute and clarigals. She was a lovely child, and had a charming voice.

'Please it, your grace,' whispered an attendant on the king, 'the time is now even-song, and we but wait your pleasure to go in.'

Moving to the private chapel, they heard the choir sing even-song, and then turned back towards the queen's apartments. Philip kept so close to the king, that one of his attendants whispered in his ear:

'This is the king's room, your highness.'

'Yes,' he replied, 'the blame is mine; but I know what I am doing.'

Philip wanted to be called once more into the secret room, but Henry, having done with him for the moment, led him round through the galleries to his lodgings. At the Tudor tower, Philip insisted on seeing his majesty back again, not through that press of company, but by way of his covered passage to the secret room. Henry held off; he only used that way in private; but his 'son' slipped past him, and bade his usher open the door, saying merrily:

'Nay; by my faith, I will show his highness to his room!'

Catching at the king's cloak, Don Philip pulled him in; on which the train of lords, amused and scandalised by the comedy, turned back and left

the kings alone—with their great topic—Edmund de la Pole.

Next morning, Philip stole once more into the secret room; and in the afternoon, each having dined alone, he stole that way again. That day the game was played, the Rose of York was won.

'You have been saved on my coast, I hope you will not suffer me to be wrecked on yours,' said Henry, in his coaxing vein: 'I mean that hare-brained fellow, Pole, who is in your country, where he plays the fool, though every one is weary of the game.'

'If he troubles your highness, I will banish him.'

'Nay,' urged his majesty; 'hornets are better in their nests, not flying abroad.'

Philip still paused. Pole, as he boasted, was his 'bit in England's mouth.' This bit was being stolen from him; but the secret room at Windsor was not a place in which he could put his argument into shape. He muttered that the exile was his friend, his guest. Henry was able to surprise him on that point. Unknown to Philip, Pole had sent a messenger to Windsor, with an offer to submit himself on certain terms. While Philip was at Melcombe, Pole had signed the papers of this mes-

senger, in which he showed a great distrust of Philip; hinting that, in the archduke's country, his freedom was abridged and that his life was hardly safe. Pole had implored the king to be his 'good lord,' and to insist on Philip setting him at liberty. On every side, his majesty was master of his game. By pardoning Pole, he could secure the right of asking for his liberation as an English prince. If Pole were not delivered, he might lodge Don Philip, as a hostage, in the Devil's tower.

This was no idle theory. The princes of that day were of a ruthless breed. Old habits still preserved their force, and deeds of treachery and violence were justified as 'acts of state.' Each reigning sovereign had his Devil's tower, and nearly all those towers were tenanted by captives in defiance of divine and human law. Louis, king of France, held the duke of Milan in an iron cage at Loches. Fernando, king of Aragon, kept Cesare Borgia in his castle on the mount. Mañoel, king of Portugal, buried the Doña Excellenta in his cloister of Coïmbra. Philip himself detained Pole in his fortress of Namur. For Henry to seize Don Philip, and to bar him in the Devil's tower, would be an 'act of state' for which a precedent might be quoted in the practice of every Christian court.

Philip was conscious of being a captive in that secret room. Anxious for his own safety, and annoyed at Pole's ingratitude, he yielded bit by bit; though he still murmured that his honour as a prince was touched. Henry only smiled:

'If that be all, we close at once; I take the whole discredit on myself.'

Notes for a treaty were set down. Pole was not named; but they agreed to act as friends, to help each other in their wars, to keep each other's exiles safe, and to deliver up all fugitives on demand.

Pole was the victim of these conferences in the secret room.

CHAPTER V.

TREATIES OF WINDSOR.

1506.

One act was played; a second was to come.

Though eager to resume his voyage, the Austrian saw that he was not yet free to go. Some days were needed for reducing things to shape. Spanish and English secretaries were at work; but many articles needed to be put in writing, and almost every clause required fresh meetings to be held. Nothing was yet sealed and sworn, neither was Pole delivered into Henry's power. La Chau observed that Henry, though he hid his game, was holding prince for prince. The softest of soft words were used, but the experienced minister felt sure that Henry must be satisfied, and Pole delivered up, before his master would be suffered to go far from the shadow of that Devil's tower.

Nor was Don Philip suffered to see the queen, his wife. One at a time was held to be enough. When things were settled, she might come, but not till every article had been signed and sworn. Juaña, though a woman, was of stouter heart than Philip, and might not be frightened like her husband, by the shadow of a Devil's tower. Points more delicate than the surrender of exiles were yet to be debated in that secret room.

Two royal matches were on the board, and more than one lady's charms were under view and review. Juaña might not like such talk. On one point she was sure to interpose.

Philip and Juaña had a son ; that Carlos, Karl, or Charles, who was to make so vast a figure in the world as Charles the Fifth. This boy, now six years old, was coveted by every court in Europe. England, Portugal, and France, were bidding, cheating, and intriguing for him ; Henry wanting him for Lady Mary, Mañoel for Infanta Isabel, Louis for Madame Claude. To each he had been given in secret treaties, of which every one had copies. Don Philip had assured each court in private that his compacts with the other courts were frauds. Henry was told that Mañoel and Louis were being tricked ; but Henry was aware

that Mañoel and Louis had been told a similar lie. No one knew better than Henry that Don Philip's promises were of the passing day—good for the day, and only for the day. He wished to have his bond renewed. Hence he had paraded Lady Mary's graces in the dance. Juaña, if at Windsor, might attempt to spoil his game; so husband and wife were kept apart.

On Tuesday the two kings hunted on the deer-course, under the Castle wall, when care was taken that the king-archduke should kill a stag. Two days of rain came next. Passing the time indoors, Henry invited his guest to read the rules and statutes of St. George; meaning, before the articles on Pole were signed, to have Don Philip sworn his knight. Next day they had a second hunt. On Saturday a horse was baited on the course, under Don Philip's tower, in which the two kings sat and watched the sport. After seeing the horse baited, they strolled into the tennis-court, in the castle ditch, where Don Philip played rackets against Dorset, the king's brother-in-law, giving his antagonist fifteen points.

Day after day the secretaries scribbled, and the sovereigns parleyed. Looking to his play,

Henry said little more of Pole, but he was eager to renew his treaty for Don Philip's son. Philip not only wanted to regain his liberty, but was anxious, on political grounds, to place his sister, Marguerite, on the English throne. He could discuss this subject better in the absence of his wife.

Since Henry had become a widower, two brides had been proposed for him; one by the Austrian court, a second by the Spanish court. Marguerite, archduchess of Austria, the imperial candidate, was Philip's sister. Juaña, dowager queen of Naples, the royal candidate, was Juaña's cousin. Philip was anxious that his sister should be chosen; not because he cared for her, but because her queenship would be good for him. Marguerite was being offered for sale as openly as Anne of Prague. Cæsar was always penniless. A princess, young and rich, a queen of wit and song—how many marks for her? If Henry bought her, Philip imagined he might grab some portion of her price. Henry, though not inclined to bid for Marguerite, hung on in policy, not caring to offend the imperial court. Against this Austrian offer he had played, and still was playing, the queen-widow offered him by Spain.

These suits were growing old. When they were first proposed, the king, in order to gain time, had asked for portraits of the ladies, saying that his people were so used to beauty, they would never suffer him to marry an ugly wife. That view had been supported by the Spanish agent in his court. 'If she is ugly, the king will never marry her, even though she brought him all the money in the world; in fact, he dare not, for these English people set an extraordinary value on female charms.' But Henry only wished to put things off.

Austria and Spain had equal interests in Don Carlos; either could break his treaty, and each insisted that the bargain for Don Carlos should include the other match. Unable to marry both the ladies, and unwilling to marry either, he had made excuses for delay. Two portraits of Marguerite had been sent to him; a portrait of the dowager queen of Naples had been refused. She would not have her picture hawked about; shown here and there, for varlets to consider whether she might pass. That was what his majesty had expected and desired; but he pretended to be anxious. 'Surely her portrait can be kept a secret. Place the picture in a box, screw the

lid down, and no one will be able to see it on the way.' Agents had been sent to Spain, with orders to observe the lady, and to note her merits and defects: the colour of her skin, the number of her inches, and the roundness of her bust. This business was no secret to the Spanish court.

Marguerite was twenty-four, Juaña twenty-six years old. Each was a widow. Marguerite had been twice married, and once divorced. Juaña had been forced into a cruel union with her nephew. Both princesses had been wretched in their married lot, and having gained their liberties, were fixed on living single lives. Knowing their minds, Henry had been able to hunt his game without much fear of falling into traps.

Ignorant of his sister's thoughts, and blinded by his hope of picking up some money, Philip entreated Henry to renounce the dowager of Naples, and to wed his sister Marguerite:

'Let us arrange these matters first.'

'Nay,' returned his host, 'when we have signed our treaty on the exiles, all may soon be well.'

A week dragged on in talk, Don Philip dropping point by point, till everything was settled as the king desired.

On Saturday the articles were fixed. Don Philip was to take the Garter; Henry, Prince of Wales, was to accept the Golden Fleece. Juaña was to come from Shene to Windsor, and confirm the treaties already signed. Carlos was to give up Claude and Isabel and to marry Lady Mary on the day he came of age. Henry was to name commissioners for his match with Marguerite. After his knighting, Philip was to sign and swear these treaties. He engaged, moreover, that his father, Maximilian, should indorse and ratify the treaties he had made.

So closed another of the king's lucky days.

A chapter of St. George was called for Monday morning, but before Don Philip was installed, he pressed once more into the secret room. Some fears had seized him; he was restive; and his host, though smiling, had to draw the curb. Don Philip yielded. After awhile, they came into the dining-room; and so, with lords and knights, ambassadors and prelates, they descended to the upper ward, and rode in grand procession over Castle hill, and through the lower gate to the western entrance of St. George's shrine.

Tapers were burning on a stand or altar in the choir. Between those tapers lay a cushion, made

of cloth of gold, and on that cushion stood the Neyt—that fragment of the Very Cross which Edward the First had brought to Windsor, and deposited in the chapel of St. George. Before that altar stood a chair of state. When all were seated in their stalls, the king stood up, and speaking to his royal guest, explained to him that every knight had to take an oath to keep the statutes before he was installed. Was it his gracious pleasure to make that oath or not? Philip replied that he was ready, but he wanted to reserve two points. Knights of the Garter had to wear the collars at stated times, and to attend in person at the Windsor festivals. These things he craved to be excused. The king allowed his suit; and then the oaths were taken, which converted Philip, archduke of Austria and king-consort of Castile, into Henry Tudor's knight.

Mass being sung and offering made, the serious business of the day came on. A council was convened. Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, produced a draft of articles for the kings to sign in presence of that Very Cross. Sitting in his stall as sovereign, Henry signed his name; sitting in his stall as knight, Don Philip signed his name. Henry gave the paper he had signed to Philip

with his own hand ; Philip gave the paper he had signed to Henry with his own hand. Then, one of the king's secretaries mounted on a bench, and told the knights and barons who were present what had just been done, and what was further to be done. When he had finished, the two kings rose, and going up to the great altar, swore the most solemn oath that men could take. Laying their hands on the holy gospels and on the canon of the mass, they swore, by that Very Cross, to keep the treaties, clause by clause and word by word. Their oaths were taken down, and each repeated in an audible voice :

' So help us God and all the saints.'

After these solemn oaths, they kissed the Holy Gospel and the Very Cross.

That evening, for the first time, Henry and Don Philip supped in company. A feast was spread as on the day of a great victory. Anterooms and galleries glowed with light, and rang with merriment. But the kings, united by a common sacrifice, supped alone—in the Tudor tower.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRIVATE STAIR.

1506.

Next day, Juaña of Castile rejoined the king-archduke at Windsor, and that merry lady took the schemers by surprise; coming to the Castle, not on the southern face, by way of the park and bridge, but on the northern face, by way of the bridle-path and Private stair.

Arundel and his guard of horsemen rode with her, but she had so much freedom, now that the main affairs were settled, as to choose her road. In place of heading for the bridge, and entering, like her husband, by the public gate near the Devil's tower, she crossed to the river front and pulled up at the base of her husband's cabinet in the Tudor tower. It was a woman's freak. No road led up the slope, and no one dreamed of visitors coming in that way. The kings were

waiting her arrival in the upper ward, with Catharine, Lady Mary, and the peers and peeresses in their train. Heralds, sword-bearers, chamberlains, each in his place and order, stood beside the gate, with minstrels and musicians ready to receive the queen.

A scout announced that she was near, and every one got ready to cry 'Welcome!' when a page brought word that her majesty was coming up the slope. Not enter by the public gate! The pageantry was marred. Henry got up to move. Philip entreated him to go inside, and wait for her in his own state-room. He would not listen. Pulling off his cap and bowing to his visitor, he insisted on his right to go down the Private stair in person and receive the lady at his door.

Followed by the princesses and their trains, he hurried to the Private stair, in time to see the horsemen halt and queen Juaña slip from her saddle to the ground. Catching her in his arms, he kissed her and bade her welcome to his house and kingdom. Catharine, who was standing by, observed his manner of saluting his fair visitor with alarm. Juaña was the loveliest of reigning queens, and his majesty, her sister thought, perused her face and figure with too bold an eye.

The sisters had not met for years; not since they were children, playing on the Alhambra terraces. Since then Juaña had become a wife and mother, while Catharine had become a wife and widow. Younger in years, Catharine was older in experience than her sister, and especially in experience of that Tudor king. Fair, bright, and witty, with a trace of wilfulness in her look, Juaña was the very woman to take an artist's eye. People who knew Don Philip were expecting him to die an early death, and Catharine was aware that princes in many capitals were dreaming of her sister's hand and crown. The king, she feared, might join that group. Evidently he was struck with her fair face. If he should turn his fancies towards Juaña, her own pretensions to the hand of Henry, prince of Wales, must be dismissed. She watched his majesty with a jealous eye.

Philip was a tipsy brute, as gross in taste as he was lax in morals. In his cups he made no secret of his preference for a Flemish frau to the more delicate charms of his Castilian wife. Juaña hated his Flemish fraus. Not long ago, she had dismissed the whole of her ladies at one stroke; her maids of honour, her bedchamber women, her

ladies in waiting; all through her jealousy of their influence with the king-archduke. Philip refused to let her choose her own attendants, and she quarrelled with the women of his choice. On quitting Flanders he had appointed Madame de Vigne to be her chief companion; Juaña would not have de Vigne about her: yet Madame came on board the ship; to be a cause of daily bickering to the royal pair. Juaña told her to go back; Philip refused to let her go. She was at Melcombe, and the queen insisted that she must return to Ghent.

'Queen Juaña is on fire with jealousy, and unless she change, she and her husband will never be able to agree,' wrote the Venetian minister, who was on board their fleet. Some people thought Don Philip would desert his wife; others, that Juaña would insist on a divorce.

No man knew better than the king what chance Don Philip had of living into length of days. Excess was telling on his frame. His pulse was nerveless, and his breath was scant; yet he was going into a land of deadly fevers, and more deadly poisons. Spies who had been to see the queen of Naples told him of Philip's prospects in Castile. The archduke was unpopular

in that country, and the peril of his landing, even if he were living in amity with his wife, was great. At discord with his wife, that peril was extreme. Thus, queen Juaña, though a married woman, was regarded as an open prize. Catharine hoped her sister would be staid.

The sisters met and kissed. A little court was formed on the green grass by the Private stair. Lady Mary was presented to the mother of Don Carlos. Lords and ladies were presented to the Spanish queen, who laughed and joked with every one, except her spouse; and then, the day being cold, the king, her host, led her up his Private stair into the upper ward, and brought her through the state apartments to the dining-hall.

Next morning Catharine went away to Shene, with Lady Mary in her company, under cover of getting ready to receive the court. Philip, not caring to be near his wife, asked leave to dine with his 'father;' which the king allowed, for he had much to say and something to unsay. Since Saturday, when he named commissioners for a match with Marguerite, his mood had changed. He wanted to delay that business. On his visitor

coming to his chamber, he produced a pedigree, and begged his 'son' to study the relationship of Marguerite and himself. They stood so near, he said, that lawyers must be heard. The matter might be cleared; but he had doubts whether his holiness could dispense with the impediments to such a match. They were of kin on both the male and female sides. A trusty agent must be sent to Rome.

Don Philip chafed; he saw the king was trifling with him; but his host was master of the field.

Henry observed that so soon as Marguerite was pleased to give her answer, a case might be prepared and secretly laid before the pope. Meantime, Juaña should be asked, as queen, to ratify the treaties they had signed.

Madame de Vigne was still at Melcombe, and the breach about that lady grew so wide, that one day Philip whispered to his 'father' that the queen, his wife, was not in her right mind—germ of the tale which in a few months was to develop into the famous mystery of Crazy Jane.

On hearing of this fray between man and wife, the king proposed to interfere. How could he stand apart and hear a beautiful woman bullied

in his house—a woman whom he wished to please? Sage councillors spoke to him; they feared he might make matters worse. It was so hard, they said, to judge between a married pair.

Juaña ratified the Windsor treaties, after which the king rode out to Shene, leaving Don Philip and his wife to follow him on Saturday—his lucky day. Left to themselves, the Austrian prince and Spanish lady wrangled more than ever; snarling and sulking, and flinging bad language in each other's teeth. On Saturday morning, Philip rode off, with dogs and falcons, on his way towards Shene. When he was gone, Juaña called her litter, and set out for Reading, on the road towards Exeter. When Philip got to Shene, he heard of his wife having fled. He was not free to follow her, for Pole was still in Flanders, and till Pole was set on English ground he was a prisoner to the English king. La Chau crossed over sea with orders to surrender Pole at the gates of Calais; but the act was not yet done; and Philip could not stir. Henry was iron in regard to Pole.

While waiting for the news of Pole's surrender, Philip desired that the affair of Marguerite might go on, so far as the commissioners could go on without the pope. Cæsar had sent full powers.

Henry consented, for the match with Marguerite was to him a comedy. Don Philip named Croi, and other commissioners; Henry named Warham, and other commissioners; who were to sit at Windsor and discuss the articles. What harm could come of seven old gentlemen wagging their beards in a royal cabinet? But this affair required Juaña's signature, and Philip undertook to get that signature from his wife. To do so, he must ride to Exeter, and Henry pretended to let him start. No further on his way than Reading, Philip fell sick, and lay in bed some days. He never told his wife what ailed him, but she guessed that he was held in pledge for Pole. At length the exile was surrendered. Two days after that event, Philip arrived at Exeter, where he found his consort in a violent quarrel with Madame de Vigne.

Juaña, having signed the treaty of Windsor, went on board her ship and sailed for Spain. Neither Henry nor Catharine were to see her face again. Within a year Don Philip was a corpse, and his neglected consort fettered to his side in the extraordinary character of Crazy Jane.

CHAPTER VII.

DISGRADING A KNIGHT.

1521.

'Be it known unto all men that Edward, late duke of Buckingham, knight and companion of the Order of St. George, named the Garter, hath done and committed treason against the king our sovereign lord!' So ran a proclamation in St. George's chapel on the eighth day of June, in the thirteenth year of Henry the Eighth's reign. No festival had yet been held that year, the rites having been postponed from April to June, in consequence of disorders in the country, springing from that mystery of mysteries, called the duke of Buckingham's plot.

Among the errors of fact which Shakespere's plays have burnt into the English mind, few are so strange as the mistakes connected with the duke's arrest. Shakespere mistook the man, misplaced the scene, misrepresented the event.

Buckingham was born a Stafford, not a Bohun. He was arrested, virtually at Windsor, finally on the river Thames in London, not as Shakespere says, in an ante-room of the palace at Westminster. He was a victim, not, as Shakespere makes him, to the cardinal's pride and malice, but to quarrels in his own party and disorders in his own house. Nevitt, the 'surveyor' of Shakepere's play, was not his first accuser. When taken, he was not in consultation with Norfolk and Abergavenny, nor could Norfolk have told him anything about the meeting of the two kings at Ardres. During that meeting Norfolk was in London, Buckingham in France. So far from Buckingham being sick of an 'untimely ague,' he was in personal attendance on the French king. Marney, not Brandon, effected his arrest. Abergavenny was not with Buckingham at the time: some days elapsed before the younger lord was caught. Wolsey was not present in council when Buckingham was examined by the king. No Sir Walter Sands attended Buckingham through the London streets. 'Enter lord chamberlain and Lord Sands:'—no Lord Sands existed in the peerage, and Sir William Sands was then lord chamberlain. As in the greater so in the minor matters, Shake-

spere was misled. Montacute should be Pole, the titular Lord Montagu. Blomer, the king's man, whom Buckingham took into his service, should be Bulmar. Michael Hopkins should be Nicolas Hopkins. Henton, a Chartreuse friar, should be Hopkins, vicar of Henton. Carr, the king's chaplain, should be Delacourt. Gilbert Peck, the duke's chancellor, should be Robert Gilbert. Yet these mistakes of time and place are trifles in comparison with the false character assigned to the duke, and the false motive given for his arrest and punishment.

A man of heated, petulant, and disordered brain, Buckingham quarrelled with his wife, his children, and his peers—trampled on the poor, browbeat the rich, and coveted his neighbour's field—till every one hated him, and peers and commoners conspired to hurl him down. Ill-usage of his wife, and grudge against the king's servants, were the causes of his fall. Pride ruined him; but the pride that ruined him was his own, not that of the lord cardinal.

On Saturday, ten days before St. George's feast, he came to Windsor; not in his usual pomp, with knights to hold his stirrup, and esquires to walk before him and behind him, but with five or

six of his domestics — chaplain, privy purse, groom of the chamber, two or three varlets. As a knight, he passed into the choir, and laid his offering on the shrine:—a gift of eighty pence. Calling the keeper of the robes, he paid that officer his fee of one mark, and left the choir, unconscious that he had seen his stall and crest, his sword and banner, for the last time.

He was going up to town; being summoned from his country-seat, because the king had need of him and his advice. On reaching Windsor, he halted at an inn, proposing to sup and spend the night. So far he had kept the road, going at his own pace, and halting when he pleased; but after quitting St. George's choir he saw some reason for alarm. Strange men were in the streets, more than were likely to be waiting for St. George's feast. On sitting down to sup, he took his memory to task. What had he noticed by the road? Men in the king's livery? Yes, here and there, he had noticed horsemen riding across country, who had pulled up in bye-lanes and at forking roads. Had any one pressed about him? Yes; some varlets had come into a tavern where he lodged; but on his sending word to them that

he declined their company, they had left the house. Were they on duty? If so, to what end?

Edward of Buckingham, fourth in descent from that Edmund de Stafford, who by help of Henry of Agincourt had married Anne Plantagenet, was living in a fool's paradise. From Lady Anne he derived a claim to quarter the royal arms, but he forgot how dearly Anne's kindred had been made to pay for that unlucky right. He read in the royal arms a promise of the crown.

For months past he had toyed with treason; listening to false prophets, casting the king's horoscope, rejoicing in the death of prince after prince. By means of largess he was trying to create a party of his own; not only in the council, but among the king's body-guard. That his servants were betraying him he never dreamt; that his peers were ready to accuse him he never dreamed. Yet many nets were closing round him, and the cords were held in resolute hands. At Windsor while he supped that night, Compton and Marney lay in wait for him, and trusty sentinels guarded every outlet from the town. Unless he tried to steal away, these men had orders not to touch him; but on any attempt to quit the road they had authority to act.

Next morning, looking out into the street, he saw more men about the market-cross and under the Castle wall—fellows in the royal livery, who seemed to be on watch and guard. One of these men he knew by sight; one Ward, a poursuivant; and on sitting down to breakfast he called the varlet to his room.

'What are you doing here?' he asked, in that sneering tone which made an enemy of every-one to whom he spoke.

'My duty,' answered Ward: 'my duty lies in this place, by the king's command.'

No sentence from the bench ever struck a criminal with deadlier weight. Duty—by the king's command! Was he a prisoner under that man's eye? If so, he knew the rest. For men like him, so rich in manors and so poor in friends, there lies no middle path.

Though the time was Sunday, he felt that he must ride to town, and see the king. Calling for his horse, and springing to his seat, he pushed across the bridge; Compton and Marney following in his wake, sure of their prey, since they were swifter riders and were better mounted than the duke. They never left him till his head was on the block.

After the execution, Dorset rode to Windsor, as the king's deputy, and held a chapter of St. George, at which Essex, Wiltshire, Kent, and other knights voted that the late duke be disgraded from his dignity as a knight.

Garter stood on a raised bench. Somerset went up into the roodloft. Heralds cleared a space about the floor. Then, in a loud voice, Garter read these words:

'Be it known unto all men: that whereas Edward, late duke of Buckingham, knight and companion of the noble Order of St. George, named the Garter, hath lately done and committed high treason against the king, our sovereign lord, and sovereign of the said Order, encompassing the destruction of the most noble person of our said sovereign lord the king, contrary to his oath and due allegiance, and for the which high treason the said Edward hath been indicted, arraigned, committed, and attainted:

'For which detestable offence and high treason the said Edward hath deserved to be disgraded of the said noble Order:

'Wherefore our said sovereign lord the king, sovereign of the said Order of St. George, named the Garter, by advice of the other knights of the

said noble Order, willeth and commandeth that the said Edward duke of Buckingham be disgraded of the said Order, and his arms, ensigns, and hatchments clearly expelled——'

As Garter read these words, Somerset tore down the duke's banner, crest, and sword, and flung them, one by one, into the choir.

Garter then read on:

'——expelled and put from the arms, ensigns, and hatchments of the other noble knights, to the intent that all other noblemen may take example not to commit any such heinous and detestable treason. God save the king!'

Heralds and officers spurned the duke's crest and banner from the choir into the ward, and from the ward into the street, whence the rabble of the town kicked them into the Thames.

A matron, young and fair, with clouded brow and mourning robe, sat in her cabinet toying with a child—a boy of five, tall for his years and pretty as a cherub—when a messenger brought to her room this news from Windsor. Like a sunstroke his intelligence shot into her brain.

She was the late duke's child—his favourite—'Lady Bess.' Early in life she had been crossed in love—torn from a man she liked, and married

to a man she feared. She was a timid girl ; her spouse a veteran of the camp. But she was doing what appeared to be her duty ; for in wedding Thomas, third of the Howard dukes of Norfolk, she imagined she was strengthening her father's house. Her sacrifice had failed, and she had come to see things in their naked light. No love had grown between her father and her husband. Buckingham, in open court, declared that of all men living he loathed his son-in-law the most. She felt some portion of her father's hate.

Trial, attainder, execution, she had borne ; not silently and meekly, but with petulant and disdainful pride.

The blood of Anne Plantagenet was in her veins, and her resentment gave her strength. Daughter of dukes and kings, she could not bandy words with insolent pages and rapacious chamberlains. While they were seizing her father's castles and estates, she uttered no complaint. But this disgrace at Windsor was too much. A rabble spurn her arms from street to street! The indignity broke her heart.

Poor lady! Poorer child!

The urchin playing at her knee was old enough to share her misery, though not to understand

the cause. He was her firstborn son; that Henry of Surrey who was to spend so many of his days at Windsor; to become a great poet, to have his arms set up in St. George's choir, to suffer harsh imprisonment in the Norman tower, and found at Windsor Castle a national School of Song.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN A KING'S HOUSE.

1530–2.

HENRY the Eighth, so blind to what is best in women, was rarely wrong in his choice of men. His agents had defects, for they were men, not gods; but they were nearly always persons who could do his work. His captains fought, his councillors plotted, as he wanted them to fight and plot. Never was his judgment sounder than when he called up Surrey to his house at Windsor, as a playmate and model for his son—the lad, whom in his fondness he made a knight of St. George, and hoped some future day to purge in blood, and set in order of succession to his crown.

When Surrey and Richmond met at Windsor, they were young enough for Surrey to describe them afterwards as being in their childish years:

> 'Windsore! where I in lust and joy,
> With a king's son my childish years did pass.'

Surrey was in his fifteenth year ; Richmond, a trifle under twelve.

In birth, in breeding, and in fortune, Surrey was the foremost stripling of his time. Except the reigning house, no family stood higher than his own. Thomas, his father, was duke, earl-marshal, lord admiral, lord treasurer, knight of St. George ; duchess Elizabeth, his mother, was a Stafford, close in kinship to the king. Through both his parents he could trace his line to Edward the First, Edward the Confessor, and the line of Saxon kings ; thus, through both his parents, he inherited some pretensions to the crown. Ten years before he came to live at Windsor, a Venetian agent had informed the Signory that in case of King Henry's death, Buckingham, Norfolk, and Suffolk had the best hopes of winning the crown. Ten years had greatly strengthened the Howard claims. Buckingham was gone ; his son, deprived of title, and reduced to poverty, was driven from court. In virtue of his mother, Surrey might claim to represent the rights of Anne Plantagenet. Suffolk had lost the wife in whom his pretensions vested, and she had left no son to carry down her claims. Norfolk remained, and Surrey was his heir. If the king's daughter, princess Mary, were to wed a

native, Surrey was likely to be chosen by the king. Choice lay between Courtney, Pole, and Surrey—princes of the line of Edward the First. Norfolk's high place and service led him to expect that glory for his son.

In arts and letters, Surrey was no less renowned than in his birth and fortune. By family he was connected with a group of wits and poets; Morley and Wyat, Bourchier, Rochester and Vere; and from this group of eminent men he bore away the palm. Four or five languages dropt from his tongue, and his mastery of English was supreme. In prose, Sir Thomas More came near to him; but the author of *Utopia* had no fine sense of metrical forms. In verse, Sir Thomas Wyat stood next to him; but the translator of the Penitential Psalms had little of his grace, and still less of his strength. Surrey drew figures, played on flute and harp, made music of his own, and sang an excellent song.

In exercises which prepare a man for war, he was an expert. Whether he cast the bar, shot at a mark, ran in the tilt, or rode after hounds, he took and kept the lead. Pride held him up, and drove him on. In every field he must be first. So far as drift of will might help him,

he was bent on holding his own in court and camp.

Surrey had much to swell his breast—birth, beauty, genius, riches ; perfect health, high spirits, and a sense of fame. With time, he must be knight and duke ; but he aspired to more than being knight and duke. His pride was high, his temper bold. Meek people called him heady ; but these people owned that his heat and mettle showed themselves mainly in his scorn of all base actions—his contempt for worthless men. His pride of virtue was as lofty as his pride of birth.

High-born, well-bred, witty in speech, soft in deportment—a boy with the intelligence of a man, a man with the vivacity of a boy—Surrey, in his fifteenth summer, was the darling of his age.

Compared with him, the king's son Richmond was a second Arthur ; pale and handsome, with a vanishing grace that struck observers like the shadow of a shade.

This boy—so linked in song and story with the royal mount—was born at Jericho, in the Essex flats. Jericho was a prior's house, standing in monastic ground at Blackmore, thirty minutes' gallop from the hunting lodge in Pirgo park. The place was screened by elms and walnuts, watered by the

'Jordan,' and surrounded by a moat. Game, fruit, and fish made up a monkish paradise. Some dozen friars were dozing in the shade, and netting the moat for tench and pike, when Wolsey, looking at the spot, turned out the prior, and furnished his abode for the king's use. It soon became a favourite haunt; a country box, in which his majesty took his ease with parties of his friends. He rode so often to that water-nest, that his pages, when they missed him from the royal cabinet, whispered to each other slyly—'Gone to Jericho!'

At Jericho, in the priory grounds, the child was born. Elizabeth Blount, a buxom hussy of the court (afterwards Lady Tailbois and countess of Lincoln) was his mother. Wolsey sprinkled him with 'Jordan' water, and the king bestowed on him his name, with frank acknowledgment of his birth in the addition of 'Fitzroy.' Only a troop of friars looked on. His mother was provided with a husband, and removed into a distant shire.

Had Catharine borne a son, this nursling of Jericho might have been bred a friar, and spent his days in netting the pond for carp and tench. But fortune favoured him. As years passed on, and none of the queen's male issue lived, the king began

to dream a dream. That urchin, sprinkled with 'Jordan' water, was his son; as much his son as John of Beaufort had been John of Gaunt's. John of Beaufort had been purged in blood, and through his issue Henry had come to reign. Why not discharge the base blood in his son, and set him in the order of succession to his crown?

His sister Margaret had a son, who, by the wise provision of his father, might succeed him and unite the Scottish and the English crowns; but he was vexed with Margaret on other grounds, and in his anger with that lady he was ready to undo the policy of his father's reign.

Steps had long ago been taken on that road. At six, the child had been produced at court, and, to the queen's amazement, owned by her husband as his son. Honours and commands had fallen to his lot; his father having made him knight of the Garter, earl of Nottingham, duke of Somerset, and duke of Richmond. Catharine had been afraid lest he would be fixed at Windsor, purged in blood, and proclaimed heir presumptive. As a middle course, he had him sent to Sheriff Hutton, with the rank of lord warden of the Scottish Borders, and lieutenant-general beyond the Trent.

A feeble lad, of warm and kindly nature, living in a distant shire, with no companion of his age and rank — no one to share his love and trust — no one to laugh aside his spurts of temper—he had been greatly spoiled. Croke, his tutor, was a fool; Cotton, his usher, was a knave. Pulling against each other, these officers had wrangled in the child's presence, turning his house into a den of strife. Between the learned tutor and the selfish usher, Richmond had been over-taxed in work and over-indulged in play. Croke had locked him up with pen and paper; Cotton had carried him to the villages and towns. Croke had taught him to write like a convent scribe; Cotton had introduced him to strolling players and the company to be found in country fairs.

What Richmond needed, when he came to Windsor, was a friend to whom he could look up. All that the king, his father, could do for him had been done. Besides his peerages and offices in the north, he had been made lord admiral, and lord lieutenant of Ireland. What he needed more than peerages and commands was a friend who would be kind to him, and give him love for love.

In Surrey he was fortunate enough to find that friend.

Surrey's family had lived at Sheriff Hutton; so that when the boys met in Windsor, they had much in common; knowing about York minster, Galtree forest, and the towers and terraces of their Yorkshire home. Love sprang up at once between them; trusting and adoring love on Richmond's side, generous and protecting love on Surrey's side. The poet afterwards recalled these early times:

'Revive within my breast,
The sweet accord, such sleeps as yet delight;
The pleasant dreams, the quiet bed of rest:
The secret thoughts, imparted with such trust;
The wanton talk; the divers change of play:
The friendship sworn; each promise kept so just,
Wherewith we passed the winter nights away.'

In the strong presence of his playmate, Richmond began to feel the power of life. His sports and pastimes took a martial and heroic turn,—as Surrey painted them in after days:

'The gravel'd ground, with sleeves tied on the helm,
On foaming horse, with swords and friendly hearts
With cheer, as though one should another whelm,
Where we have fought, and chased oft with darts.

With silver drops the mead yet spread for ruth;
In active games of nimbleness and strength,
Where we did strain, trained with swarms of youth,
Our tender limbs—that yet shot up in length.
* * * * *

The wild forest, the clothed holts with green,
With reins availed, and swift y-breathed horse,
With cry of hounds, and merry blasts between.'

A noble picture of boyish sport: sport of the manliest type, fitting the youngsters for the dash and storm of war. How different to the scenes in Richmond's life in Yorkshire, with the pedant and his lesson, with the vagabond and his troop!

The king was thinking only of his son; but in his choice of Surrey for a playmate and example to that son, he gave the bard some portion of the training of that shepherd-king whose psalms he was to render into English verse,—the training of one who, lodged in a 'king's house,' was still as one 'set apart' and nurtured on 'the bread of tears.'

Life lay before the young and voiceless poet, like the landscape seen from St. George's keep:—a fore-ground sparkling in the sun, a background darkening into mist and cloud. Before him were —the court, the battle-field; the prize of love; the wreath of bays—and then, behind that screen, the figure of a headsman, standing with uplifted axe.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MAIDEN'S TOWER.

1532–5.

Though living at Windsor mainly, Surrey and Richmond sometimes rode away; once for a year of Paris and the south of France. On their return they found their 'fortunes' waiting for them in the Maiden's tower.

During their absence in the south, a change had passed over their Windsor home; a change of tenants, a change of ceremonies, and a change of principles. A dull and miserable court, guarded by friars and dueñas, had become a court of wits and scholars, with a queen all hopes and smiles, surrounded by a bevy of lovely girls.

The drama of the Great Divorce was closed. Henry and Catharine had come to Windsor as man and wife, if persons who lived apart could yet be called man and wife. Henry had lived in the

Tudor tower, while Catharine occupied the Queen's apartments. Secret room and covered passage had been closed. At last, the king, to put an end to false appearances, had gone away—alone—leaving his orders that her highness, 'his brother's widow,' must not follow him. She might go into the nunnery of St. Albans. If she preferred a worldly life, she had the manors settled on her as Prince Arthur's bride, and choice of three or four other country-seats. But when she drove away from Windsor, she was not at liberty to return. Catharine had ceased to be his queen.

Anne Boleyn had come to Windsor, where she was created Marchioness of Pembroke, as a prelude to her putting on the matrimonial crown. Returning as a queen, she had brushed away the Spanish gloom, and lighted the old fortress by her presence, like Elizabeth of York. To no one was the change more welcome than to Surrey and his friend. Surrey was the queen's first cousin—of the Howard blood. Richmond liked her, as a lady who was always kind to him. Catharine had treated him with heat and petulance from the first. How could she help her rage? His mother had been her rival, and he was himself a rival of her child. His presence was to her a scandal and reproach.

Anne had no reason for dislike. The boy was born while she was absent, and before the king had seen her face. Attention to his mother had not wounded her; nor was the stripling in her way. If she should give the king a son, her son would be prince and heir. Thus, Anne was free to treat him kindly, as her husband's son.

Not without pride and hope, she saw the young men lift their eyes towards the Maiden's tower.

In that tower lodged two girls—her maids of honour—who were near to her in blood; Lady Mary Howard and Lady Frances Vere; the first a daughter of her uncle, Thomas, duke of Norfolk; the second a daughter of her aunt and namesake, Anne, countess of Oxford. Richmond turned his eyes on Mary Howard, while his companion gave his thoughts to Frances Vere.

Some time ago, the king had tried to gain a foreign princess for his son, but he had failed in his attempt. Doña Maria, of Portugal, a niece of Charles the Fifth, had been his choice; but Charles had spurned his offers with contempt: 'Bastards! Bring me no bastards!' Henry had felt this scorn, and after his marriage to Anne Boleyn he had dropped all foreign suits. Richmond was young enough to wait.

Left to his own course, he fell in love with his friend's sister. What more likely? Mary was always in his sight; sometimes with her brother, sometimes with the queen. Even in that court of lovely girls, she was a peerless gem. In rank, the lovers were well mated, for the daughter of a duke is equal to a duke. With all his posts and titles, Richmond had much to gain from an alliance with the ducal house. In winning Mary, he won the queen, made friends of Norfolk and his partizans, and buckled Surrey to his side for ever. Under the queen's eye and sanction he preferred his suit in the Maiden's tower.

Surrey's enslaver, Lady Frances, was no beauty; a detractor might have called her plain; but she was pure and good, with homely ways, and tender, pitiful thoughts. In Surrey's eyes, such graces drove mere animal beauty from the field. She took his heart, and kept her empire to the end.

Lady Frances saw her lover, as we see him in the Windsor portrait; tall, and fair, with hazel eyes, proud curl of lip, and light moustache; wearing a scarlet cap, a doublet seamed with lace, a dagger hanging from his belt:—a boy of boys, a man of men.

He pressed her for a pledge of love. She gave that pledge, and he was satisfied in heart:

> 'Stood never man so sure
> Of woman's word.'

But love is testy, and the lover of eighteen summers teased himself with doubts. What, if her pledge, so freely given, should not endure?

> 'Such wayward ways hath love,
> That most part is discord.
> Our wills do stand, whereby our hearts,
> But seldom do accord.
> Deceit is his delight.'

Surrey and Richmond lay in the king's house, near the Tudor tower. Frances and Mary lodged in the Maiden's tower, above the upper ward, in which their lovers rode at tilt. By day, they met in the park, and on the slope; at night, they gathered in the queen's chamber, where they sang songs, danced rondos, and told stories of love and war. Love mixed with sport, and rather spoiled that sport—as sport. Surrey was fond of tennis, which he played with Richmond in that open court where Don Philip had beaten Dorset, after giving him fifteen points. On stripping for their game, they saw the girls, with other maids

of honour, standing on the leads above. Surrey has sketched the scene:

> 'The palme play, where, despoilëd for the game
> With dazëd eyes, oft we by gleam of love,
> Have missed the ball, but got sight of our dame,
> To bait her eyes which kept the leads above.'

In Anne these lovers sought their main support. Surrey was a favourite with the queen; his birth, his wit, his presence, taking hold of the woman's heart. Anne felt proud of him—the coming duke, the pillar of her mother's house. Frances seemed worthy of his hand; worthy in her good heart, in her domestic virtues, to become the mother of a line of dukes. Who was to think of him if not the queen? Norfolk was hankering after princess Mary; for if Surrey matched with Mary, he might live to share her throne. The duchess was insane.

Except the queen, who could assume, for boy and girl, a mother's place? Fifteen years older than Surrey, she knew what pitfalls lay in wait for him. His time for playing in the Tudor tower and jousting in the upper ward, was drawing to an end. Duty was calling him into foreign lands. To see him fixed in life, united to a girl he loved, before those days of his

temptation came, was one of her majesty's dearest hopes.

For Richmond and Lady Mary she was hardly less concerned. Before her union with the king, she had already taken up their cause. In those days, little had been heard at court except debates on the affinities; relationships of men and women caused by birth, by marriage, by sponsorship, and by illicit love. Chaplains preached on affinities, comedians joked on affinities. What males and females were related to each other, and in what degree? What swains and maids were free to enter into marriage bonds? No one felt sure. Was Richmond free to marry Lady Mary? No divine in church and court could say. That question must be asked in Rome. Anne caused the question to be asked. For some time no reply was given, but six months after her coronation a brief arrived at Windsor with the papal seal. These things were done so deftly, that, in spite of Cromwell's hints, his majesty spoke of Richmond's match with Lady Mary as a project of his own.

In his Elegy on Windsor, Surrey has described these early scenes:

> 'The large green courts, where we were wont to rove,
> With eyes cast up unto the Maiden's tower,

And easy sighs, such as folks draw in love,
The stately seats, the ladies bright of hue,
The dances short, long tales of great delight,
With words and looks that tigers could but rue,
Where each of us did plead the other's right.'

* * * *

Things so fell out that each of the two lovers had some power of pleading 'the other's right.' At that time no one had such influence over Mary as her brother. Norfolk and his consort were at feud; the lady, under Cromwell's instigations, having left her home. The cause assigned was jealousy: 'the ill-life I have had with my husband since he first loved Bess Holland.' Bess, of whom she was jealous, had been Mary's nurse; and Mary, thinking her mother's suspicions baseless, sided with her domestic. Mother and daughter, like wife and husband, were now at strife. Mary was a little spoiled; a girl of wild, unreasoning temper, apt to run into extremes, and to imagine taunts and slights. Only her brother had the skill to keep her straight and true.

Richmond, on the other side, was potent in the house of Vere. Oxford, though chamberlain and Knight of the Garter, was a discontented man. One of his ancestors had been a marquis and a duke. He wanted to regain the cap and sword.

Marquis of Dublin, duke of Ireland! Only through the king's son, could he regain the lost inheritance of his house. Richmond was lord lieutenant, and the chamberlain heard that his father was preparing to crown him king. Should that event come off, Richmond, as king of Ireland, might make him duke and marquis. Richmond was therefore potent in the house of Vere.

When Richmond's dispensation came to Windsor, he was fourteen years of age; old enough to plight his troth, not old enough to set up house. Mary was younger than himself. Surrey was in his eighteenth year. Their troths were given; on which the swains were left at Windsor with their books and lutes, their hawks and hounds. The queen, retiring from the king's house, carried off their youthful brides.

In Surrey's Elegy the swains so left alone are pictured to the eye; a pair of noble youths, wearing the flower of love and waiting for the fruit:

> 'The secret groves, which oft we made resound,
> With pleasant plaint, and of our ladies' praise;
> Recording oft what grace each one had found,
> What hope of speed, what dread of long delays.'

In the beginning of his twentieth year, Surrey, coming in scarlet cap and mantle, claimed his

bride at the queen's hands, and carried her to Norwich house; where, in a pretty courtesy, he had her scutcheon—the arms of Vere—painted on a window-pane; pairing with his own—a love-knot, pretty to the eye, and free, as one might think, from menace to the heart.

Norfolk, on his marriage, had quartered his wife's arms; those arms which she derived from Gloucester, the murdered duke; but on finding them cast from St. George's choir, and spurned through Windsor, he had prudently erased them from his shield. Surrey, prouder and less prudent than his sire, restored them to their place in his coat-of-arms. Neither he nor his young wife dreamed that in setting up Gloucester's scutcheon he was tempting Gloucester's fate.

They kept their honey-moon for a year; a year of youth and love. Then came a season of gloom and pain, which closed the pastoral of their Windsor life.

CHAPTER X.

BLACK DAYS.

1536–7.

In April, Anne became the object of a plot, in which Cromwell, Calvinistic secretary of state, and Wriottesley, Catholic lord chancellor, lent their assistance to Edward Seymour, one of the hangers-on at court, known by his sour visage and his luck at cards, to destroy the queen, and lift his sister Jane, a middle-aged coquette, into her majesty's seat.

In May, the queen was murdered, and her court of wits and scholars broken up. Wyat was arrested, Rochford lost his head. Next day after the queen's murder, Jane was in her room. Seymour got a peerage for his crime. The day was Sunday; henceforth to be Seymour's lucky day.

In June, a bill to bastardize Elizabeth was

pushed through parliament—a bill that cut her off, so far as votes and seals had power to cut her off, from all her birthright in the crown.

In July, the Windsor mates were parted by the hand of death. Surrey was at his country-house; Henry was on his third honey-moon; the girl-duchess, Mary, waiting her beloved at Kenning hall. No other persons cared about the little duke. Seymour detested him, for both his own sake and his wife's sake. Each was a rival of his sister Jane. By what means—foul or fair—he passed away, no man can say. Like to the beginning was the end of that strange life. Out of the shadows he had come, into the shadows he fell back.

In August, Surrey succeeded in begging his brother-in-law's remains. At Windsor, where he had lived so long, Richmond was denied a grave. Seymour was quick enough to see that a tomb of Richmond in St. George's chapel would be like a preacher lifting up his voice in favour of his widow and her kin. Seven miles from the chamber in which his widow prayed for him, he found, in Thetford priory, a temporary resting-place.

In September, Seymour and Wriottesley raised the question, whether Lady Mary's union with the

duke was good in law. On Richmond's death Mary was entitled to a jointure; but she had received as yet no more than four jennets, a silver salt and bason, and six silver spoons. Wriottesley denied her right. His law was bad; but for a season every thing was stayed by orders from his court.

In October, Norfolk was called to Windsor by the king. A rising in the north had taken place, and many of Norfolk's friends were in the field, fighting against 'the new men.' Seymour was adopting popular arts, posing as the poor man's patron, girding at the rich, and calling himself the people's friend. The northern yeomen laughed at him. Hook, scythe, and arquebus in hand, they asked the king to drive such scum as Cromwell, Seymour, and Wriottesley from his house, and seat the old nobility at his council board. Counting their lines, and finding they were strong in pikes and guns, if not in arguments, the king parleyed and explained:

'Marry, my council is of noble men; the duke of Norfolk, the duke of Suffolk, the marquis of Exeter, the earl of Oxford.'

He was trifling with them, and they understood his tricks. Norfolk was their hero; and the

priests in York, like those in Rome, expected him to join his party. Surrey had cause for fear. This call to Windsor might be nothing but a cloak to cover his arrest. 'Heaven save him from their hands,' he sighed, as his father gallopped for the Windsor road: 'if once they get his head, they will very soon have mine.'

In November, the crazy duchess entered into a compact with the enemies of her husband's house. Her brain had wholly given way. The stamina of her race was poor, and in her stormy life she had become a wreck. Unhappily, she had survived the blow:—upright in body, overthrown in mind. Unhappily, she could use a pen, and find a messenger for what she wrote. By Cromwell's arts, she was inveigled into helping the Seymour faction to rob her daughter, and to ruin her husband and her son.

Norfolk found Windsor restless, but his life was in no danger—yet. One day the king seemed ready to set out; next day he doubted whether Norfolk were not fitter than himself to take the field. Seymour asked for the command, but here his majesty stood out. War was no game of cards. Suffolk was afield, but his advance was slow, his name unpopular, his strength diminishing. If

Seymour marched, the shires would all be up against the crown.

A Catholic of old family, Norfolk had much in common with the rebels. What they asked, he asked—to have the new men swept aside, the ancient peers recalled, and a proper understanding with the church. For him to march against them was to break their staff. How could they prate of old families, when armed against the premier duke? If Norfolk could be trusted, he was clearly Henry's man, and he was named to the command.

By fair means and by foul, Seymour opposed this policy. Unable to change the king's mind, he laid his trains to cause delay. Here, the mad duchess helped him. She had thrown herself into Cromwell's arms, making that enemy of her house her 'very good lord and special friend.' Acting on his lures, she had bound herself by two articles never to see the duke again. Neither love nor fear, kind words nor unkind words, should draw her back to Lambeth house and Kenning hall. She poured her sorrows into Cromwell's ear. The duke, she told that minister, starved her on fifty pounds a quarter, and three hundred marks a year. She could not live with him, on account of Bess. At Kenning hall there

had been daily brawls and fights. Her children were as bad as her husband; her son, an ungracious son; her daughter, an ungracious daughter. They had taken a harlot's part against their mother. 'I may say I was born in an unhappy hour, to be matched with such an ungracious husband, and so ungracious a son and daughter.'

All these scandalous words, read in the Tudor tower, were afterwards whispered in the chapel, canvassed on the slope, repeated through the King's house.

'I pray you, my lord,' she wrote to Cromwell, 'to be in hand with the king, to expedite me a better living ere my husband goes northward.'

Seymour was glad to have such help. If Norfolk could be kept at Windsor till these suits were heard, some other man might trample out the fire, and save the realm. Again the duchess wrote:

'Though I be left poor, I am content, for I am out of danger, and the life I have had since my husband first loved Bess Holland. I am fully determined never to write nor send to my husband as long as I live. If he take me again, I know it will be more for shame of the world than for any

love he beareth me. . . . I pray you show my husband this letter.'

One day, in a moment of returning nature, Cromwell said to the duke:

'My lord, you are a happy man that your wife knows no harm of you, for if she did, she would certainly undo you.'

While these intrigues were going on, reports came up to the King's house that discontent was spreading in the town, below the Castle wall. A priest had preached sedition in his church, telling his hearers that those who helped the rebels in the north were taking part with God. Brought into the King's house, that preacher owned his words. Who were his friends? Who set him on? He named a butcher, who was instantly called in. Witnesses deposed that this butcher, on being asked the price of a sheep, had named a sum, saying he would take no less. His customer said, 'It is too much.' 'Nay, by God's soul,' cried the butcher, 'I had rather those good fellows in the north had it, and a score more of the best I have.' Short shrift, long rope, were given to these offenders. Tried, convicted, sentenced under martial law, that priest was led from the Castle to the bridge, and strung on the nearest tree;

while his friend the butcher, dragged across the lower ward, was hung on a new pair of gallows at the Castle gate. In thirty minutes all was over; yet the spirit of the town was hardly quelled. The bodies were expected to be stolen in the night; and guards were posted at the gallows, and beside the bridge.

Warned by such facts, the king made up his mind. Norfolk rode out; settled his business in the north; and after making peace, came back to Windsor, strong enough to divide the council and to share the government.

Convinced that the old fires were not yet dead, Henry thought sadly of the time when he might be no more, and a dynastic war might rage, embittered by religious hate. Who, in that struggle, would be able to protect his infant son?

Seymour was the next of kin; but though he put on popular airs, cried 'Liberty! liberty!' and called himself 'friend of the people,' he had no following of note. He was a demagogue, without a forum and a camp. Norfolk and Surrey were connected with the warlike barons, who might hurl their swords into the scale.

Unlike his father, Surrey was a liberal,

opposed in heart and mind to what he called 'The Old Superstition.' His father called him 'rash,' impatient of authority, inclined to 'trust in his own wit.' When Norfolk thought of clerical right, his son thought of national independence; but the task of working out that independence must be safer, Surrey fancied, in the hands of peers and gentlemen, than in those of upstarts who had nothing to show in the way of birth and little in the way of parts. To him, Seymour was a gambling squire, Wriottesley a pettifogging lawyer, Cromwell a blacksmith's son. What could he say to villains who were tampering with a crazy brain—leading his mother, in her madness, to betray the innermost secrets of her home?

Henry strove hard to reconcile these men. Norfolk was chosen sponsor to the prince. When Seymour was made an earl, Surrey was knighted with unusual pomp. When Jane was carried to her grave in St. George's chapel, Surrey was appointed one of her mourners. By her open grave he stood with Seymour; but he rose and left the shrine as much estranged from him in heart as ever. Peace between them might be; fellowship between the cousin of Anne Boleyn

and the brother of Jane Seymour, there could never be. That day of mourning in St. George's chapel was no more to either of these rivals than a day of truce.

CHAPTER XI.

THE VIRGIN BRIDE.

1539–42.

Mary, the Virgin Bride, remained at Kenning hall, as though she were expecting her bridegroom to arrive from Windsor and assume his rights.

Surrey raised a monument in Thetford priory to his playmate, and had a portrait of him painted in Lambeth house. What more he was to do, lay hidden in the future, for his Voice had not yet come: nor was he conscious that his pen might yield memorials of his sister's husband to outlive the sculptor's marble and the artist's paint. Song wells from an abyss; but he was living down into the source of song. His youth was gone. The scarlet cap and robe were laid aside, and he was henceforth to be dressed in black and purple. When his second son was born, astrologers cast the child's nativity, and found for him a youth of

penury and distress. The stars seemed all unfriendly to his house; yet neither Surrey nor his consort saw that their worst planet was that escutcheon on the window-pane which he had painted in his love at Norwich house.

Seymour took a long step forward when he won Anne Stanhope for his second wife. Though jealous of male Plantagenets, Henry liked to have ladies of the royal blood about his throne. This union stirred up Norfolk into measures of defence.

The king had a second brother-in-law—the prince a second uncle—in Tom Seymour; a handsome lad, who sate his horse and turned his rapier like a man. Tom was a favourite; more so than his brother Edward; for, unlike that brother, he asked for little and looked content with less. On winning the bedchamber, he appeared to have no higher hopes. 'That youngster knows his game,' said keen observers; betting that he would one day oust his brother from his place. Norfolk, noticing the lad's good points, conceived the plan of uniting him to the Virgin bride, and making a new party in the court.

Mary came up about her jointure, which Seymour's creatures, aided by her crazy mother, were holding back.

'Let my daughter of Richmond have nothing till my claims are paid,' the demented lady wrote: 'the king got no penny with her; that was managed by Queen Anne. Why should she have jointures? My father paid two thousand marks with me, and other great charges, which my husband has forgotten in his wealth and honour and doting fondness for that quean.' The duke, she said, had robbed her of her clothes and jewels; he had brought his harlots to her house, yet she had always been a good woman; even when he was absent in the wars! The king, she said, had been a witness how she had used herself in her lord's absence, having lived at his court without ill name and fame. And what, she asked, was her reward? At forty she was left to starve! 'My daughter of Richmond is coming up and Bess Holland with her; that harlot which hath put me at this trouble; and it is eleven years since my lord first fell in love with her. And yet she is but a churl's daughter, and of no gentle blood.'

Except this nurse, Mary had no person of her own sex about her. Surrey disliked the nurse; a woman of dubious conduct and a cause of family strife. Bess paid him for his sayings with a saucy tongue.

Seymour kept the jointure back, and Cromwell was intriguing to get rid of Mary by marrying her to a man of such obscure position, that in four-and-twenty hours Henry forgot his name! Why not? inquired the secretary. Read this account of her, written by her mother's pen:

'Never woman bore so ungracious and unnatural a daughter as I have done.'

One day, Norfolk, being with his majesty, hinted at a match between the Virgin bride and Tom Seymour. Henry started. That was his own idea. But, before a second word was said, an act of justice must be done. Snatching up a pen, he wrote a line to Cromwell, ordering him to tell off 'his daughter's jointure,' and to pay her the money down. Tom Seymour wed his daughter? Yes; he was content.

'Yet Tom,' he added, merrily, looking at the duke, 'is but a knight.'

'Nay, that is nothing, if your grace be pleased,' returned the duke. 'The lad is brave and honest, and your highness has selected him for a servant. I have found no good in mating high blood with high blood, and am contented to forego a greater match.'

The king laughed merrily, as he answered:

'Well, if you are minded to bestow our daughter on Sir Thomas, you shall be sure to couple her with one of such youth and lustiness as will please her well.'

Tom, on being called, expressed the greatest rapture with his fortune; but he wished that Cromwell, in whose house he served, might have the credit of making the first advance in his behalf. The king was pleased. Again, he sent to Cromwell, saying, that after seeing the duchess's jointure paid, he must take advantage of meeting the duke that night at supper to propose the match:

'The king's highness, not only noting a certain zeal and trust in the said Sir Thomas Seymour towards your lordship, but also esteeming him for his honesty, sadness, and other good qualities—as one that is nothing addicted to his brother's affections—to be worthy of the said marriage, hath commanded me to require you to take a time convenient to the purpose aforesaid. And forasmuch as his highness is informed that the said duchess goeth to-morrow or the next day into the country, his grace prayeth you to take your time the sooner, so that while she is still here the matters may be entered in such sort as the same may take effect according to his most gracious pleasure.'

But the virgin-duchess closed her ears against these plans. Marry again? No; never! Her love lay dead in Thetford priory. She was a Virgin bride, sacred to him—her lord, her spouse, her love!

Surrey spoke to her. Happy in his home, with her friend 'Frank,' he longed to see his sister lay aside that phantasy of a Virgin bride, an settle down, like her companion, to the duties of domestic life. Tom, he said, was a dashing fellow; with her or without her, he would rise. The king was moving in the match, and being her father-in-law, as well as sovereign, he had a double right to choose for her. A king, he was entitled to her obedience. Her place was in the court and near the king, and in that place she had her part to play; a part not less in power and dignity to that of Seymour's wife.

Mary was deaf to him, as she had been to others. Love appeared to her unlawful and unholy. She was vowed. Forget her spouse? She put away this suit as an offence, and taking horses, fled into the neighbourhood of her buried lord.

When Anne of Cleves came in, Surrey and Seymour were the foremost figures in her court. Anne failed to please, and Cromwell, who had

made the marriage, fell into disgrace. Her figure ruined him. Norfolk, rising at the council-table, cried to the tamperer with his insane consort: 'I arrest you of high treason!' Clutching his cap, the fallen man exclaimed, 'Is this my reward?'.

Giving him no time for prate, Norfolk tore off his George. Wriottesley, so long his creature, snatched away his Garter. 'Traitor, traitor!' yelled the councillors who for years past had been voting as he smiled or frowned. 'You shall be judged by the bloody laws which you have made!' said Norfolk. Seymour left him to his doom. 'Now,' said Surrey, when the axe had fallen, 'is that foul churl dead — stricken down with his own staff!'

A new queen came to Windsor with the matrimonial crown. In spite of those acts of bastardy which had been voted in the Seymour interest, Catharine, the new queen, took Elizabeth, now a child of seven, and placed the orphan on her own right hand as princess of the blood. She gave offence, and roused alarm. Priests who had risked their necks in ruining Anne Boleyn, turned on her fair cousin, at the first alarm of her kind dealing with the princess. Only twelve days after her coming to Windsor, Franklin, dean of the chapel,

told the secretary of state that a priest in Windsor had been uttering evil of her majesty. Called up, this railer named a person in the town as his authority. Both men were clapped in the dark chamber, under Henry's gate. 'Let the priest be warned to mind his business, and moderate his tongue,' the king replied, when he was asked what should be done: 'and let the layman lie in ward till we think fit to let him go. See that good care be taken for his meat and drink.'

Seymour and Seymour's faction took the matter up. Henry was unlikely to live long, and if the queen survived him, she was sure to be appointed regent, and her uncle Norfolk guardian of the prince. For Seymour and his friends here was a fight for life, and all that made life pleasant in their veins.

In early youth, Catharine had been much neglected; left with housekeepers and ladies' maids. Pages and professors had been much about her, and the women of her chamber either knew, or said they knew, of things which touched her credit with the king. Some of her faults had been committed when she was hardly in her teens; but Henry, though he found her faithful and devoted from the hour of his marriage, quitted her the instant

she was charged. He hid himself at Windsor in the royal house until the axe divorced him from his wife—fifth of the group of women whom he had either divorced or slain.

A second murder in the Howard family through the agency of Seymour, gave new edge to the old rivalries. Surrey was rising in the state. During Pole's insurrection, he was sent into the eastern shires, where, as the king's lieutenant-general, he had shown such talent for affairs, that when the French appeared to be threatening the Pale round Calais, Henry despatched him into France. Seymour was deeply hurt. He held the place of first commissioner for French affairs; and he was burning for an active life. His victories at the gaming-table promised him, he imagined, victories in the field. Surrey now came back with so much glory, that the king bestowed on him the Order of St. George.

Yet four months after his installation, he returned to Windsor with a troop of guards—a prisoner of the crown!

CHAPTER XII.

ELEGY ON WINDSOR.

1542.

After passing under Henry the Eighth's gate, a prisoner of the crown, Surrey broke out into his famous cry:

> 'So cruel prison! Who could betide, alas,
> As proud Windsor?'

Across the lower ward, in front of St. George's chapel, and beyond the dean's house, he was conducted to the Inner gate; a line of defensive masonry, consisting of two turrets and a solid curtain, known in more recent days as the Norman tower. Here, his guards drew up. A fosse and drawbridge blocked the road, and a portcullis barred the gate. A vaulted arch supported an upper chamber slit for archers. In the joining of the ribs were lions' heads, which could be lifted

up, leaving round holes through which boiling lead might be poured into the narrow path below. Each turret had two rooms; a lower room for guards and servants, and an upper room for prisoners. The southern turret opened on a stair connected with the keep.

Into this tower, the prison-house of Michael de la Pole and of Thomas Pegott, abbot of Chertsey, Surrey was conveyed.

He was the victim of his own high spirit. At twenty-six, Surrey was an experienced man, fitted by his birth and training for the task of guiding the young prince's steps. Once before, the king had chosen him for a similar task, and he was almost sure to make that choice again. So Seymour feared, and so his creatures feared. How could they taint the young man's fame? He led a life so pure that he was deemed austere. He neither drank, nor gambled, nor intruded on his neighbour's hearth. His friends were like himself —the gallant Wyat, the rigid Pickering, the pious Clere. His loyalty to his wife was like his loyalty to his prince. What fault could they allege against this stainless knight?

Wriottesley was equal to his work. One day John à Leigh gave Surrey some offence. This

Leigh, a roysterer of the town, was frequently in jail, and still more frequently under fine and bond; but neither fine nor bond induced the unruly fellow to keep the peace. For such a ruffler to offend the earl was easy. Nothing is known about the cause of strife, which may have been contrived by Wriottesley. Surrey challenged Leigh to fight. This was what Seymour wanted and what Wriottesley expected. Knowing his pride, they felt that on Leigh affronting him, he would lay aside his rank, and offer to fight him on equal terms. And they were right. Surrey disdained to plead his rank. 'Defend yourself!' was all he cared to say. No blood was shed. Though parted on the spot, the men were summoned by the council to explain. Surrey declined. These councillors were not his peers. How could they be his judges?

Here was an offence, or what the councillors might report as an offence. Defy the king's ministers! They committed Surrey for contempt of court.

The king endorsed their act. The brush with Leigh was nothing, but his majesty insisted that his ministers, whether 'new' or not, should be treated with respect. Pickering, a man of family, attached to the new learning, passed between the

council and his friend; yet Surrey had to bear for sixteen days the stench and misery of a prison, separated from his wife, his children, and his friends. He asked to be 'sent into the country, to some place of open air,' even though his freedom should be still restrained. He meant his country-house, where he might have the society of his wife and children. But the favourite got him sent to Windsor, where his recent honour might be tainted by his present shame.

The scene was part of his own life, his early home, the day-dream of his youth. Here, towered the Keep, with mounds and gardens sacred to his love. South of that Keep stood the Maiden's tower, in which his wife had lodged—the tennis-court in which he had struck the ball, while she and his sister Mary 'kept the leads above.' In front of him rose that temple of St. George, from which his mother's hatchments had been spurned, and in which he had recently been installed. Behind him dropt the orchards and the hundred steps, down which he used to slip for the water-side. But more than all, he thought of that gentle boy who had been his playmate in the King's house, who had become his sister's bridegroom, and in

spite of his royal blood had been denied a grave on the royal mount.

An injured man, he lifted up his voice in song. Passion found vent in words, and in the act of utterance he chased away his pain:

> 'And in remembrance of a greater grief,
> To banish the less, I find my chief relief.'

The boy so dearly loved, so early lost, rose up before him in the darkness of the Norman tower. Richmond seemed to be again at Windsor, lodging with him in the King's house, hunting with him in the royal chase, playing with him in the tennis-court. Fired by these scenes, the prisoner sang:

> 'O place of bliss, renewer of my woes!
> Give me account. Where is my noble fere?
> Whom in thy walls thou dost each night enclose,
> To other lief, but unto me most dear?
>
> Echo, alas! that doth my sorrow rue,
> Returns thereto a hollow sound of plaint.
> Thus I alone, where all my freedom grew,
> In prison pine, with bondage and restraint.'

No verse had yet appeared in English words so brisk and yet so smooth, so rich and yet so massive, as this Elegy on Windsor. Under the captive's touch, the vision of his fancy sprang to life; choir, keep, and forest glade, took shape; tower,

terrace, tiltyard, rose before men's eyes; and the bright striplings, with their sports and studies, and the yet brighter maids of honour, lived again in that noble verse, all set aglow in the red fervour of a human love. Richmond's enemies had refused him a grave at Windsor, so that he should have no part for ever on that regal mount. But Surrey, stationed as a captive in the Norman tower, swept all their malice to the winds. So long as verse is cherished, Richmond will inhabit Windsor Castle, under the protection of his 'noble fere.'

England had yet no native school of song. In Chaucer she possessed a story-teller of the highest rank, and round that figure stood a group of troubadours, who had thrown their stories into rhyme. But these men were not singers, and had no pretension to be called an English school. The system of their verse was foreign. Chaucer thought in French. Gower affected Latin. Tuscan was the ordinary model; but the writers who had followed in the wake of Petrarch and Pulci had hardly yet produced one musical English line. Latin measures are not suited to the genius of Teutonic words, which have a march, a lilt, a resonance all their own.

Surrey was the first to beat that march, adopt

that lilt, awake that resonance. Chaucer and his imitators counted on rhyme and movement for effect; Surrey invented metre, and produced his verse in tunes. Thus song began with him. Poems like the *Canterbury Tales* depend on qualities apart from lilt and sweetness; on their roll, their character, and their humour. They would live in prose, and keep their salt without the use of rhyme. Not so with Surrey's writings. What is vital in his songs and elegies is the softness of their flow, the brightness of their phrase, the symmetry of their form. Apart from what they say, they have the charm of song. Chaucer narrates, but Surrey sings.

Till Surrey's day no one suspected the capacities for music latent in our common speech. After he set the tunes, all poets aimed at song. Verse without music ceased to be considered verse.

Surrey not only gave our tongue a metrical sense, but beat his measures into music so refined and smooth that some of his exercises sound like melodies from the pen of Milton. Who, on reading these lines a first time, would imagine they were written fifty years before Shakespere wove a couplet, more than a hundred years before Dryden wrote his *Alexander's Feast?*

'When first I saw those crystal streams,
Whose beauty made my mortal wound,
I little thought within their beams
So sweet a venom to have found.'

These notes were beaten from a tongue then said to be uncouth and savage—good enough for dogs and horses, but unfit for men. Surrey stands midway from Chaucer to Dryden; but in language he is ten times nearer to *Alexander's Feast* than to the *Wife of Bath*. In Dryden's day, Chaucer was so obsolete as to require translation into English. No one ever dreamt of modernising Surrey's lines.

Windsor was the cradle of this school of song. Here, Surrey learned to sing in words, to pour out syllables which melted into air as tunes. Here, he composed his *Elegy*, and commenced his legend of *Fair Geraldine*.

CHAPTER XIII.

FAIR GERALDINE.

1542.

Fired by the discovery of his gift, Surrey went on singing. It was easy labour; for the flow was in his blood, the music in his heart. But what should follow from his pen?

Lying in the Norman tower, he shaped a love tale, not in narrative form, like Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, but in the half-dramatic style of plaint and counter-plaint; in which two voices—say of nymph and shepherd—should conduct a story, through ascending and descending orbs of passion. Petrarch had given the first idea of this form; but he had never worked his own conception out. Wyat had tried his hand; but, being all too busy with the things of earth,—wars, treaties, royal matches,—he had never done true honour to his gifts. In stronger verse than Wyat's, Surrey began his legend of Fair Geraldine.

The tale is dated Windsor, in the days of his imprisonment, by the bard himself:

> 'Hampton me brought to wish her first for mine;
> Windsor, alas! doth chase her from my sight.'

Who was his Fair Geraldine?

In the south aisle, outside St. George's choir, stands a famous niche or closet, known as Lincoln chapel. Built by Beauchamp, bishop of Salisbury, to receive the bones of John Shorne, it held during five reigns that holy man's more holy boot. A tomb now occupies the site. A marble slab sustains two effigies in alabaster:—effigies of Edward de Clinton, and Elizabeth, his wife. The knight is clad in armour, and both knight and lady lift their hands in prayer.

Edward de Clinton was a sailor; one of a band of heroes which included Effingham, Drake, and Raleigh. Among these eminent men he held a place, some people thought the foremost place. He fought by sea and land; fought against the Scots, the Spaniards and the French. Advancing step by step, he became lord admiral, knight of the Garter, privy councillor, and earl of Lincoln. When he died in years and service, the great queen, who had known him from her girlhood, laid his

ashes in this chapel as the highest honour in her gift.

Yet great as Lincoln was, Elizabeth, the lady lying by his side, was a more notable personage than himself. She was of kinship with the queen, her mother being first cousin to Edward the Fifth and to Elizabeth of York. Ties, old and new, connected her with Windsor. Hundreds of years ago, her fathers had been lords of Eton and Burnham, and co-partners in the manor of Old Windsor and in the site now covered by the Norman keep. The district was identified with her race. Walter Fitz-Other and Walter Fitz-Walter, two of her ancestors, had been the first and second Constables of the Keep. They bore the name of Windsor as a family name. Some of her family sailed for Ireland; but the barons of Windsor, holding alike by tenure and by writ, were of her blood. Yet her best claim to sepulture in St. George's chapel has not yet been named. That lady lying in alabaster, in the Lincoln chapel, was Fair Geraldine — one of the bright heroines of English song.

Aught else? Was she — as nearly all the romancers and ballad-mongers say — the poet's darling, and the object on his part of an illicit love? From Thomas Nash to Walter Scott, the

romancers and ballad-mongers say so. Putting his good countess and her children out of sight, these witnesses have invented for the poet a passion, an intrigue, a journey into Italy, a tournament of love, a victor's shield, and heaven knows what—with dukes, and festivals, and tourneys—visions of the night, visits to natal chambers and to necromantic vaults—through all of which the lady is made to look like a wanton, while her lover is represented as acting like a fool.

It is enough to say that dates upset these tales.

Surrey had no illicit loves, as Nash pretends; he made no journey into Italy, as Drayton dreams; he fought no man for Geraldine, as Walpole and Warton say; he made no descent into a magician's vault, as Scott imagines. Surrey never saw that figure of his lady lying 'on couch of Inde:'

> 'O'er her white bosom strayed her hazel hair,
> Pale her dear cheek, as if for love she pined,
> All in her night-robe loose she lay reclined.'

Much nonsense has been printed by female rhapsodists on 'loves of the poets;' ladies whom certain poets are imagined to have loved and sung. These 'loves' have been treated from the carnal side; the ladies being represented as having the

misfortune to be other men's wives. Frowns from male critics have drawn out brave excuses from those female rhapsodists. Each side has been swift to take both love and guilt for granted; yet a reader of old poetry should know that most of these pretended loves were, in the carnal sense, no loves at all.

Art has her canons, which a poet must obey. Writing on love, and speaking in the first person, the singer needs a mate; one who can stand apart —an idol, an idea, a respondent—to be wooed, entreated, and denounced; one who can answer to these passages as the sway and progress of his tale requires. A shepherd, he must have his nymph. In all times poets have projected from their minds these shadowy figures. A pagan poet hailed his muse; a Christian bard invoked his saint; one turning to Hera and Aphroditè, the other to St. Catharine, Mary Magdalen, and the Virgin Mother. They were beings of the mind.

No little of the worship paid by monkish writers to the Madonna, glowed with the fire, and throbbed with the ardour, of a mundane love. That fire was no less warm in sober England than in fervid Italy and Spain. Late in Elizabeth's time, Southwell the Jesuit was writing verses to the Virgin, warmer

in phrase than anything addressed by Surrey to Fair Geraldine.

None of these beings were the objects of unlawful love. Dante took a living woman for his muse; but Beatrice, though uncanonized, was for him as much a saint as Mary Magdalen. He never loved her as a woman; never asked her to become his wife. She chose another husband, and he chose another wife. For him, she was a model and a name, just as the Madonna might have been for him a model and a name. So, too, with Petrarch and with Wyat. Laura was not Petrarch's wife, nor had the Italian poet any thought of making her his wife. Anna was not Wyat's wife, nor had the English poet any thought of asking her to be his wife. Laura was Petrarch's muse; Anna was Wyat's muse. So with Surrey and Fair Geraldine. He took a living damsel for his counterpart; but he was not in love with her, except so far as Shakespere may be said to have been in love with Portia, Viola, and Imogen.

Poets who followed Surrey in his art, adopted his employment of imaginary mates. Sydney had his Stella, Spenser his Rosalind, Browne his Marina; all of them creatures of the earth. Geraldine was a girl of flesh and blood, as Chrysostom's Olympia

had been a woman of flesh and blood. And she was equally the poet's 'saint.'

Gerald, ninth earl of Kildare, a son of that Gerald who had mutinied against Henry Tudor, and been twitted with his willingness to 'crown an ape,' had married Elizabeth Grey, a cousin of Elizabeth of York. From that union sprang Fair Geraldine. She was a child, not seven years old, when Surrey married Lady Frances Vere, and the whole of his relations to the child were singular and pitiful.

Her house was ruined, and the agent of that ruin was the duke, his father. When Norfolk sailed for Dublin, on the eve of Buckingham's fall, his object was to crush her family; and he had done his work so well, that he had left her hardly root or branch. Gerald, her father, had been driven from court. Tom, called 'Silken Tom,' her brother, had been hung at Tyburn; two of her uncles dangling by his side. Gerald, her younger brother, lay in hiding among the Irish bogs. Lord Leonard, her maternal uncle, had been executed for trying to save some portion of the wreck. The Geraldines were spent; house, country, rank—all gone. The orphan was a beggar, and without a name. Once she had been Lady Elizabeth, now she was only

Mistress Gerrot. Of her countless miseries, the poet's father was the agent, even if he were not the cause.

In pity for the child, Henry allowed her to live with his repudiated daughter, Mary, and to go about with her from Hunsdon to Hampton Court. There, when she was twelve years old, Surrey first saw the little Irish girl.

Such was the orphan child, whose form and name he borrowed for his legend of Fair Geraldine; a story told in verse so fresh and musical, so close in line, so rich in colour, and so true in passion, as to charm all readers and convert the Irish girl into a heroine of song, more famous than that Lady Jane Beaufort who had been sung into her queenship from the Devil's tower.

CHAPTER XIV.

COURSE OF SONG.

1542–43.

Light broke on the Norman tower. Moved by that picture of his lost son's life at Windsor, Henry turned his heart towards his brilliant captive, and an order was despatched to Windsor for his speedy liberation. Yet the grace was not complete. Seymour had power enough to impose his terms of pardon. Norfolk was in the North, conducting his campaign against the Scots. Winter was coming on; the autumn had been wet and sickly; and the troops, driven back from their advance, were going into quarters, suffering in health and mutinous in spirit. Surrey was to join his father in the North.

Knowing the enmity that drove him from his wife, his children, and his home, he wrote :

'Spite drave me into Boreas' reign,
Where hoary frosts the fruit do bite;
Where hills are spread, and every plain,
With stormy winter mantles white.'

While he was absent on the border, fighting and writing with equal dash, he lost his old friend Wyat, his master in poetic art, his model of a perfect man. Since Richmond's death, no loss had fallen so heavily on his heart. These poets had the same tastes, the same views, the same hopes; both were refined, both patriotic, both religious. Much of what was best in the men of that generation, seemed to have met in these originators of English song.

Though quickening in the 'new light,' Englishmen were not moving towards either the Old Superstition or the New. Their march was on a neutral line, for they possessed an ancient and an independent Church. A man like Wriottesley might hanker after Rome, a man like Seymour sigh for Geneva; but the run of peers and scholars, squires and burgesses, were content to be what their fathers had been,—men of an old race, conscious of the past, unwilling to shed blood for articles of faith; yet bent on living their own lives, on keeping their own goods, without per-

mission from an alien priest. Their fathers had enjoyed these rights. In times of civil strife, a foreign yoke had been put about their necks; but they had thrown that burthen off, and being free again they nursed no enmity to the Roman church. Their quarrel with the papacy was more political than doctrinal. They saw some good in Rome, the ritual and discipline of which were suited to a southern race; but they were more concerned about their country than about the Roman church. They wished to see their country free; that end attained, they had no thought of shedding blood in the name of heaven. Plain, sober, practical, they were ready to admit in others what they claimed themselves—the widest liberty of thought, and some fair share in liberty of speech.

Surrey and Wyat were masters in this English school. One of Surrey's favourite books was Wyat's *Penitential Psalms:*

> 'Where he doth paint the lively faith and pure,
> The steadfast hope, the sweet return to grace,
> Of just David, by perfect penitence.'

'Repent, and be saved—return to grace by penitence,' that was Surrey's theory of life, as it had been Wyat's theory of life. On turning his

new sorrow into song, Surrey found once more a solace in the act of beating into lengths the measure of his pain. Other bards bewailed the dead poet; but no other bard in verse like Surrey's.

Some of their tears, indeed, were false; as false, said Surrey, as those shed by Cæsar on Pompey's dust:

> 'Some, that watched with the murderer's knife,
> With eager thirst to drink thy guiltless blood,
> Whose practice brake by happy end of life,
> Weep envious tears to hear thy fame so good.
> But I that knew what harboured in that head,
> What virtues rare were tempered in that breast,
> Honour the place that such a jewel bred,
> And kiss the ground wherein thy corpse doth rest.'

Young Wyat, the poet's son, was a brilliant lad; not lettered, like his father, but a rider and a swordsman of the foremost class. He, too, was a reformer, and a champion of Anne Boleyn's child. Like Surrey, he despised the forms and rites which under the Old Superstition took the place of a living faith. Like Surrey, he rejected the piety of fish on Friday and cheese in Lent. Hence his connexion with Surrey—not only in those French wars in which he makes so fine a

figure—but in that episode of St. Lawrence lane, which brought the noble poet into trouble as a gospeller, lodged him a second time in jail, led to his Satire on the London Citizens, and ended in the charge of nursing pretensions to the crown.

This tale, though one of the leading passages in Surrey's life, has never yet been fully told.

One Friday night, Dick Bourne, a tailor, dropt into a butcher's stall in St. Nicolas Shambles for a drink and chat. Castel, the butcher, his friend and gossip, was a man of means, supplying cuts and joints to people in his ward, under rules laid down by the bishop's ordinary. While Bourne was sipping his ale, one Alice Flaner, a serving wench from Arundel's hostelry in St. Lawrence lane, bounced in :

'Your man deceived me last night,' she huffed.

'How, Alice? and in what?' inquired the butcher.

'In that knuckle of veal,' pouted Alice. That veal, she said, was not his best; her mistress must be better served: she paid for the best, and she would have the best!

Dick turned his ear.

What! ordering veal?—The day was Friday; when the ordinary's rule forbade a man to cut

veal, except by license. Who was wanting veal in Dowgate ward on fast days?

Alice was glib of tongue:

'Marry! we keep good company at our house! Peers of the realm should eat that veal; and one of them a prince!'

Dick smirked at Alice, whom he had not seen before:

'Aye, say you so? Who shall be that prince?'

'The earl of Surrey,' said the girl.

'Well,' pondered Dick, 'he is a man of honour, and likely to become of greater honour. But he he is no prince.'

'My mistress said so,' answered Alice, not to be silenced by a tailor tippling from a can of ale.

'Your mistress says so? Who shall be your mistress?'

'Millicent Arundel, of St. Lawrence lane.'

The tailor noted her reply for future use.

St. Lawrence lane, in Dowgate ward, was then a fashionable part of town, close to the manor of the Rose, near to Cole Harbour, hardly a bow-shot from the Tower. Arundel's hotel, a place with gardens, arbours, and shady walks, was the resort of young men of family—friends of the new learning—advocates for a nobler life in Church and

State. Of these young gallants, Surrey was the chief. There he had a suite of rooms, furnished by his own people. There, he could protest by word and deed against the theory that a Christian life meant fish on Friday and cheese in Lent. Hundreds of the wardmen were of his opinion, but they had to live under Gresham's eye, and under Bonner's rule. Surrey had no fear of either alderman or prelate. Under Gresham's eye, and under Bonner's rule, he set the courts at naught. Alice, the serving-girl, was sent out openly by her mistress, Millicent Arundel, to the butcher's shop, for meats prohibited by the magistrate and bishop. People who only kept their fasts from fear, took heart. No secret was ever made as to what was being cooked and eaten in St. Lawrence lane. A few—the chief of Dowgate ward—began to follow the example of their chief; though most of their neighbours, awed by Bonner's faggot and Gresham's whipping-post, clung in their terror to the ancient ways.

Richard Gresham, a bad man, a worse magistrate, held a court appointment in the city—that of King's exchanger—a post of much pecuniary gain. To keep his place, he had to give and take: to give his services in his court, to take his profits

in his shop. But he was equal to such tasks. The king was shifty in opinion; but he never veered his points too quickly for the money-changer to follow him. It was Gresham's boast, that protestants and popestants were to him the same; for each he had a whipping-post and a stake.

Surrey's companions in these protests were Pickering and Wyat the younger: gentlemen of birth, who slept under his roof and ate at his board. All three were soldiers, looking forward to a life in camps.

Two nights after Alice had been prattling in the butcher's shop about her 'prince,' an idea came into Surrey's head, that his 'protest' might be carried one step farther. Why not go among the sinners in that hive of sin, and startle them in their sleep? A Bible reader from his youth he knew the sacred text:

'Hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from Me.'

Was that a call?

'If thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.'

Why should not he, Henry of Surrey, go forth into the haunts of vice—

'A figure of the Lord's behest,'—

and warn the sinners of a day of wrath to come? Two objects, lying near to him in his city lodging, stirred his ire. One object was Gresham's bank in Lombard street, known as the 'Grasshopper,'—a money-changer's den, as foul, he thought, as any that had been overthrown in the Gentile court. Another object, no less hateful, was that nest of stews, licensed by Gardiner for public infamy, under the towers of Winchester house. On those unclean and noxious places, he proposed to make a midnight raid:

'In loathsome vice, each drunken wight,
To stir to God—this was my will.'

Surrey took up a cross-bow, used for shooting stones. Wyat and Pickering did the same. Pickering's liveries were white; and some of his servants being near, they were selected for the raid. Slipping from the house, the young men headed up St. Nicolas lane, passed the butcher's shop, and halted at the bank in Lombard street. Stray folks were reeling home. Surrey and Wyat spoke to them, calling on them to search their hearts, repent of their evil deeds, and learn to walk in a better way. Facing the 'Grasshopper,'

they fired their pebbles into Gresham's house, breaking his glass, and frightening the old sinner from his sleep. The City watch got up; but they were young and swift. Dropping to the water-side, they stept into their barges, manned by their own liverymen, and pulled across the Thames.

'In secret silence of the night,'

they drew up their boats in front of the long row of Gardiner's licensed stews; and at a signal, poured into those dens of vice a volley of stones from their cross-bows; startling the harlots and their paramours with a sudden crash, as though the heavens were falling on their heads. By two o'clock, the messengers of wrath had done their work and gained their lodgings in St. Lawrence lane.

Next morning, cries were heard among the queans and their abettors. Men had been startled in the street; glass had been smashed in several houses; and people had been frightened for their lives. The white coats of Pickering's men were known, and every one laid the charge of rioting at Surrey's door.

Millicent bade her servants hold their tongues. When neighbours asked her whether his lordship

of Surrey had been out that night, she answered with a 'Nay, nay.'

Coates, the lord mayor, and Bowes, a money-lender in the city, being anxious to please the courtiers, took the matter up.

Frighten an alderman in his bed! If such things passed, who in the City would be able to sleep at night? Could any one give evidence about the rioters? Yes; Bourne, the tailor, and Castel, the butcher, had a tale to tell. The magistrates sat in court. Alice deposed, that Surrey and a party of young gentlemen had supped that night in St. Lawrence lane. At nine o'clock they had gone out, in white coats, taking four cross-bows; and they had not come back when she went to bed. That was all she knew.

'Come, come! had she not spoken in St. Nicolas shambles of a prince?'

'Yes, she had called the earl of Surrey a prince.'

'Why so?'

'Because her mistress told her he was a prince.'

Here was no matter for a lord mayor and a city money-lender to decide; but they were timid men, and wished to feel their ground. Alice's evidence was sent to court.

Seymour leaped at an offer from the city magistrates to accuse Surrey of a riot. Rioters in the public streets could hardly be appointed guardians to an infant king. But Seymour, not to show his game too soon, stood by while Alice was examined by his colleagues, Wriottesley and Browne.

Browne was in love with Fair Geraldine. Sixty years old, with sons grown up, he had little chance of winning his majesty's Irish ward, except by Seymour's help; and he was willing to obtain his prize, even by ruining the man to whose writings she owed her fame.

Alice replied to Wriottesley and Browne, as she had done to Coates and Bowes.

'Who told her that the earl of Surrey was a prince?'

'Her mistress.'

'When and why?'

A tailor had left a piece of bad cloth for him in Lawrence lane. Seeing his stuff, her mistress had said aloud: 'I marvel they should deceive a prince!' 'Why, mistress, is he a prince?' the girl had asked, and her mistress had answered, 'Yea.'

That was her evidence; that, and no more. But the unjust councillors entered on their sheet

these words, as part of Alice's report of Millicent's speech : 'Yea, and if aught should come to the King but good, his father should be king.'

One Blage, a false friend, who had gone over to the Seymour party, sneaked that night into Arundel's hotel. A seeker after light, he used the house like other seekers after light. He picked up little that his new patron cared to learn. Wyat, Clere, and Pickering, he heard, were in the riot; but Seymour had no rivalry with any of these lads. What about Surrey? Surrey had received him, and had talked of the affair; saying that his raid had done no good. The times seemed past for Wisdom, in the shape of gospellers and messengers of wrath, to cry aloud in the public ways. 'I had liever,' he had said to Blage, 'than all the gold in the world that it were undone. I am sure it shall come before the king and his council; but we shall have a madding time in every young head. I am sorry for it.'

Millicent confessed that the young gentlemen had eaten flesh in her house, on Fridays and in Lent; that they had gone out one night at nine o'clock; that, next day, people had talked to her about broken glass; and that she had put them off. When asked if she had put them off

by Surrey's orders, she answered quickly, that she had silenced her wenches of her own accord. Surrey had never told her to bid them hold their tongues.

Blage had come to her house, and she had heard him speak. The earl had said he was sorry for his prank, but that every young head had a 'madding time.'

'But she had called him prince?'

'She had. He was a prince.'

'Had she also said, that "if aught but good came to the king, his father should be king?"'

'No, never; she had simply said he was a prince.'

Nothing was to be made of such evidence. By usage, if not by law, Surrey was entitled to the name of 'prince.' The stall he held at Windsor was a prince's stall.

Wriottesley fell back on Coates and the city magistrates:—the flesh in Lent, the broken windows, and the outcry in the public stews.

> 'London, thou hast accused me
> Of breach of laws—the root of strife.'

While defending his motive, Surrey confessed his fault. Though he had hoped to do some good, his raid was, in effect, a breach of the public peace.

The lords, acting on Seymour's nod, committed him to the Fleet; pretending to class him with gospellers who were beginning to disturb official slumbers with their cry for liberty and light. Wyat and Pickering, his companions, were committed to the Tower.

What more could Seymour do?

An incident at Windsor seemed to offer him a chance of bringing Surrey into peril on a charge of heresy.

A gospeller of another kind was causing trouble in St. George's Chapel, and the king being roused to anger, his advisers were considering how to punish that gospeller for his offence. The thought occurred to them: 'why not send the duke of Norfolk to the Castle, as his majesty's deputy?' A zealous catholic, he was sure to see offence in what the Windsor gospeller had done; and he was not unlikely, in his rage, to send that criminal to the stake.

If so, his sentence on his victim, might be quoted on the trial of his son.

CHAPTER XV.

A WINDSOR GOSPELLER.

1543.

Robert Testwood, singer in St. George's choir, was waging war against the religion taught by Gardiner in the pulpit, and upheld by Wriottesley in the marble chair. Gardiner, prelate of the order, had a voice in everything done at Windsor; but the chorister had no more fear of Gardiner than had the young gentlemen in Dowgate ward.

One afternoon, while pacing up and down the aisles, Testwood observed a group of rustics march into the chapel, bearing images and candles, which they had bought from a wax-dealer on the doorstep, to lay on the shrines of St. George, Our Lady of Windsor, good King Henry, and Master John Shorne. 'Poor rustics!' sighed the chorister. They were wasting time and spending money in

a senseless journey, having trudged from distant parts of England to kiss a spur, to put on a rusty cap, adore a dagger, and press their fingers on a stone. He saw the group break up. Some of these rustics knelt, some offered candles, others only stood and gaped. He glided up to them and spoke. Why had they come to Windsor? Only to see a lot of stocks and stones? They stared and listened. Taking breath, he urged them to give up that running after stocks and stones, and turn their faces towards a living God. He had a soft and tuneful voice, and some of these rustics, after listening to his homily, swore they would go straight home, and march on pilgrimage no more.

Warmed by this first success, the gospeller glided to a second group. Back in the Lady chapel stood the alabaster figure known as the 'White Lady'—Our Lady of Windsor—the original genius of the spot; older than the altars of St. Edward and St. George. To touch a portion of that image with the finger was an act of grace. A rustic, after touching that marble with his finger, crossed his brow and cheek, under the belief that he was thereby cleansing his soul from sin. Testwood, coming up to the altar, raised a big key, which

happened to be in his hand, and cried aloud to the astonished worshippers :

'Lo, good people, see what it is! Nothing but dust and ashes!'

Swinging his key, he struck the image, chipping away the virgin's nose. Some of the worshippers sprang to their feet, others threw themselves on their faces. In a yet louder voice Testwood cried out again :

'Ye see! it cannot help itself. How, then, will you have it help you?'

Stunned for an instant only, the yokels rose on that idol-breaker, who had hardly time to open a door and to escape with life. Knowing his way, he got beyond their reach; but crowd on crowd now gathered round the shrine, whispering to each other the story of that sacrilege. Into the multitude pressed one Simon, a Windsor lawyer, with an eye for business. Simon stooped down and searched the floor; no one had dared to touch that chip of broken nose. Simon secured his prize, and laying it carefully in his pocket-book, muttered to himself: 'This shall be a dear nose to Testwood, one of these days.'

Simon, a man employed by members of the old confession, had some laurels to regain. A year

ago, Father Melster, vicar of Windsor, had preached a sermon in which he had spoken about Our Lady holding out her breast to St. Bernard, and squirting milk into his eye. Melster, an unfrocked friar, was preaching from his new pulpit the stuff that in his earlier days he had learned to preach in the tavern yards. But times had changed, and Filmer, a churchwarden, had accused him of irreverence, and cautioned him to adopt a more decent style. Smarting under this rebuke, Melster had consulted Simon, who had counselled him to resent his churchwarden's words. As Filmer stood his ground, both sides had laid their case before Salcott, bishop of the diocese. Melster and Simon had been rebuked. 'Trust me,' snarled the pettifogger at the liberal churchwarden, 'I will be even with you one day.' For the past twelve months he had been raking up matters against Filmer and men of Filmer's opinions. Testwood's proceedings offered him a chance of doing something;—so he carefully put up his bit of broken nose.

Next to St. George's day, Relic Sunday was the greatest feast of the Windsor year. On Relic Sunday, dean and canons, priests and singing-men, put on their robes, and taking the most sacred relics from their altars, marched round the chapel,

chanting their psalms, and holding up their treasures to the public gaze. At other times, a man might kiss King Henry's spur, and see the armbones of St. William and St. George; but only on Relic Sunday could he feast his eyes on the battered skull of St. Thomas, on the moth-eaten cloak of St. Martin, on the clots of Our Lady's milk. Testwood had a place in this procession. One of the canons held the pix, around him stood the clergy, while a sacristan, passing round the circle, placed a relic in the hands of each. He offered Testwood a piece of cloth.

'What is that?' inquired the chorister.

'A rochet of St. Thomas of Canterbury,' replied the sacristan.

'If you give that to me I shall make sport of it,' said Testwood.

Thinking the chorister wanted to carry something else, the sacristan passed on, distributing his relics. Testwood stood empty-handed, till a verger, coming from the great altar, offered him the dagger of St. George.

The proudest knight at Windsor would have fought for such an honour; but the chorister had neither chivalry nor superstition left. He was a gospeller, an idol-breaker, out and out.

'Give that to Master Hake,' he sneered; 'he is a pretty man of his hands.'

The verger gave the blade to Master Hake, on which the gospeller strode into the clerical circle, and in a loud voice broke the hush and silence of the choir:

'Sir!' he cried, addressing the canon who bore the pix, 'Master Hake hath St. George's dagger. Now if he had St. George's horse, St. Martin's cloak, and Master John Shorne's boot, with King Henry's spur and hat, he might ride where he would!'

Canons and choristers changed colour; but the relic-spurner, glowing with zeal, strode back into his rank, and stood there, ready to march with the rest, and sing his portion of the psalm.

Simon was not the only man who made a note of that extraordinary scene on Relic day. But there was more to come—much more to come—before the idol-breaker's cup was full.

Among the singing-men Testwood had a rival in one Phillips, who sang in the king's chapels, and only came to Windsor when either his majesty or his majesty's deputy, was here. Testwood disliked the man. Phillips, aware of his own good points, gave out the longest chants, arranged

with verse and counter-verse, in which the gospeller had to sing his part. Wishing to stand well with Gardiner, he favoured musical pieces of the Catholic times. Thus, at the anthem he sang *Laudati veni*, with the cry and counter-cry, '*O Redemptrix et Salvatrix.*' Testwood regarded such words as a denial of Christ. He would never sing them. Phillips, his senior, said he must. The chorister held out, not caring whether his effects were spoiled or not. When Phillips pealed out '*O Redemptrix*,' Testwood answered him with '*Non Redemptrix ;*' when Phillips added '*et salvatrix*,' Testwood responded, '*nec salvatrix.*' Phillips strove hard to sing him down, but Testwood raised his voice at each repeating line. '*O Redemptrix*,' was always met with a yet louder '*non redemptrix ;*' '*et salvatrix*' with a yet louder '*nec salvatrix.*'

Some of the canons smiled ; but Franklin, the dean, was greatly shocked. He pulled that chorister up, but Testwood was too strong for a febrile dean to crush. One day, a copy of verses, written in honour of Our Lady of Windsor, appeared on the chapel door, ascribing to that image a power to forgive sins and to save souls. Testwood tore the paper down. Next morning he observed a second copy pasted on the jamb. He waited till

the dean came up, and while the dignitary paused to cross himself, he tore that copy down in Franklin's presence.

Too much shocked for speech, Franklin crept to his chair; but when he had calmed his nerves, he sent for the offending chorister:

'I marvel greatly how you dare to be so bold as pluck that paper down in my presence.'

The idol-breaker looked in pity at the dean:

'And I marvel much more that your mastership should suffer such a blasphemous paper to be set up.'

Franklin sank into his seat, on which the gospeller added in his scorn:

'Pray you not to be angry with me; I shall stand to what I have done.'

Unable to repress his singing-man, Franklin wrote to his friends at court. Salcott, his bishop, should have heard the charge; but Salcott, after his decree in Filmer's business, was distrusted by the Romanizing dean. Franklin appealed to Gardiner and Wriottesley, who saw a chance of putting down heretical opinions, in a manner which enabled Gardiner to interfere in his brother Salcott's field, and Wriottesley to put his colleague Norfolk's orthodoxy to a galling test. Seymour

supported the persecutors, for their cause, indeed, was his. Gardiner was furious with the poet, who had called attention to his brothels on the river bank. Wriottesley was longing to injure Norfolk, who, on shrinking from his duty, might lose his credit with the fanatics of his church. Seymour, aiming at getting Surrey out of his way, saw that if Norfolk sentenced Testwood to death for sacrilege, the verdict might be turned against his son.

The festival of St. George being over, Norfolk called up the chorister. Taking his facts from Franklin, he assumed the offender's guilt, and glowered at the man so darkly, that bets were laid on the poor chorister passing from his presence to the gallows, if he were lucky enough to escape the stake. Attack Our Lady of Windsor, and refuse to bear the dagger of St. George! Men had been burnt for a quarter of Testwood's crime.

But when Norfolk came to hear the chorister, he found that this hot gospeller was one of those men who shared the religious sentiments of his son. His case was hard. If he condemned the chorister, he condemned his son; if he dismissed the chorister, he impeached himself. His hand had always been against these men; yet

he was not so harsh a fanatic as to put his son's life into peril for the sake of speculative opinions. He had called his son a fool, but he had never thought him a criminal. He dealt with Testwood in a spirit of mercy, but he veiled his mercy by expressions of contempt. The man, he said, was cracked, in every thing except his voice. In future let him stick to his scores, and leave divinity to learned men. To the dismay of Franklin, who, like Gardiner, longed for fire and smoke, he sent the chorister home, unpunished, even by the loss of his place in St. George's choir. His sentence, as the king's deputy, was beyond appeal.

Gardiner, maddened by his failure, swore that, in spite of dukes and deputies, he would have that chorister's life. The crime of heresy was one for an ecclesiastical court, and he must find a way to bring his chorister under the judgment of such court. Wriottesley was no less vexed than Gardiner. A pretender to the catholic leadership, he was bound to show more zeal than Norfolk. He was ready to go all lengths with Gardiner. They were sure of Seymour's silence, even when they dared not reckon on his support. He was a puritan, leaning towards the views of Calvin; but so long as Surrey's case stood over, and

Wriottesley nursed a hope of being able to show that smashing a harlot's window at Bankside was an offence as grave as that of breaking Our Lady's nose at Windsor—Seymour and his party might be counted on the prosecutor's side.

CHAPTER XVI.

WINDSOR MARTYRS.

1543.

Simon was employed. While waiting for his orders to begin, this Windsor pettifogger had been spying in the streets; listening to the new preachers; showing his bit of Our Lady's nose; and hoarding up scraps of private talk, whether heard at first hand or received at second hand. When wanted, he was ready; not to uncover a single heretic, but to accuse a dozen persons of heretical views and heterodox practices. To Filmer and Testwood, he owed a grudge. These men had thwarted him and punished him. He breathed revenge. But he was ready to go higher than a Windsor churchwarden and a Windsor singing-man. On hearing that Gardiner was inclined to reach some person of the court—with a design of drawing in the new and liberal queen—he offered to bring evidence that heretical sentiments were

creeping up from the town into the chapel, from the chapel into the King's house.

Such evidence suited Gardiner. Catharine, sixth and last wife of the Tudor sovereign, was an enemy, and he proposed to cut her off, as he had seen two other Catharines mown away. A great step might be taken towards this end, if he could prove by evidence that under the new queen's eyes, the King's house at Windsor had become a tainted spot.

Simon produced his book.

One Antony Pearson, he reported, was a popular preacher in the town, who drew great crowds of hearers. He denounced idolatry and papistry. He raised his voice against the altar and the mass. Yet he had followers in the chapel and supporters in the King's house, as well as under the Castle walls. Haynes, prebendary of Windsor and dean of Exeter, was his friend. Testwood and Marbeck, singers in the chapel, were his followers. Sir Philip and Lady Hoby, Sir Thomas and Lady Cardine, Mr. and Mrs. Snowball, with others of the king's household, were his aiders and abettors. Filmer, the churchwarden, was of his flock. These men and women were denounced by Simon to the bishop as heretics, more or less concealed.

Going to the king's cabinet, Wriottesley and Gardiner told his majesty that heresy was cropping up, not only in his town of Windsor, but in his privy chamber, and they asked his leave as councillors to execute his laws. Henry had no objection to his laws being put in force. They wanted a commission to search for books and papers. 'In the town,' said Henry, 'not in the Castle.' He would not allow his house to be disturbed. Yet, on this royal license, they not only sent down searchers, but committed Haynes and Hoby to the Fleet, where Surrey was in durance, waiting the result of these transactions in the chapel and the King's house.

On Thursday afternoon, next before Palm Sunday, searchers came to Windsor privately. At night, between eleven and twelve, they broke into several houses, taking the sleepers in their beds, both hale and sick, and seizing all books and papers, in the hope of finding tracts against the Six Articles. Testwood was ill of gout, unable to walk a step, but he was bundled out of doors, and hurried to the common jail. Soon after him Filmer and Marbeck were brought in. They lay in Windsor jail till Monday, when an order came to carry them up to London. Testwood was too ill

to be removed; but Filmer and Marbeck were committed to the charge of Bonner and Gardiner. Bonner thrust the churchwarden into his private jail, while Gardiner sent his prisoner to the Marshalsea.

Aiming at the ruin of Haynes and Hoby, as a means of reaching at the queen, Gardiner took on himself the business of chief inquisitor. Marbeck, having a wife and children at Windsor, seemed the man most likely to give way to fear and hope. Chaplains were sent to worry him in his cell. When they had skilfully prepared his mind for yielding, Gardiner had him taken to Winchester house. Marbeck's offence was that of having made a Concordance of the Bible for his private use; offence enough in Gardiner's eyes; for what had an unlettered man to do with the comparison of sacred texts? But, for the moment, the bishop had higher game in view. He wanted proof of the existence of a 'sect' at Windsor, in which Hoby, of the king's household, and Haynes, dean of Exeter, were concerned. Was there an unlawful sect? Marbeck replied that he knew nothing of unlawful sects at Windsor.

'Marbeck, wilt thou throw thyself away?' stormed the persecuting bishop.

'No, my lord, I trust not,' answered the poor singing man.

'Yet, thou goest about it, for thou wilt utter nothing. What a devil made thee meddle with the Scripture? Thy vocation was another way, wherein thou hast a goodly gift.'

Proud of his voice, the poor man answered him:

'Yes, my lord; and I have done my part therein, according to that little knowledge God hath given me.'

'And why the devil didst thou not hold thee there?'

Gardiner tore off in a rage; the poor chorister following on his heels. The prelate halted in a gallery, and turned on the singing man:

'Sirrah! the nest of you, I trow, is broken! Look, here are your captains, Hoby and Haynes!' Opening out a roll, he showed the names: 'Hoby and Haynes, with the whole pack of your sect in Windsor—yet, thou wilt utter none of them?'

'Alas, my lord, how should I accuse them, of whom I know nothing?'

'Well, if thou wilt needs cast thyself away, who can let thee? What helpers hadst thou in setting forth thy book?'

'Forsooth, my lord, none.'

'None! How can that be? It is not possible thou shouldst do it without help!'

'Truly, my lord, I cannot tell in what part your lordship doth take it; but I will not deny that I did it without the help of any man, save God alone.'

'Why shouldst thou meddle with that thing which pertaineth not to thee?'

A priest came up to say that mass was ready.

'Here is a marvellous thing,' cried Gardiner, speaking to the priest; 'this fellow hath taken upon him to set out the Concordance in English! That book, when it was set out in Latin, was not done without the help of a dozen learned men; yet will he bear me in hand that he hath done it all alone!'

Turning on Marbeck, he exclaimed:

'Say what thou wilt. Except God Himself would come down from heaven and tell me so, I will not believe it!'

When Gardiner came back from saying mass, he called to his chaplains:

'This is a marvellous sect! The devil cannot make one of them betray the other!'

After putting on his rochet and other garments, he turned to the singing man:

'Marbeck, I am now going to the court. If I had found thee tractable, I proposed to have spoken to the king's majesty for thee, and to have given thee thy meat, drink, and lodging, here, in my own house; but seeing thou art so wilful and so stubborn, thou mayst go to the devil for me.'

But Gardiner was not content to let the compiler of a Concordance 'go to the devil' without a padlock on his arm and leg:

'Stokes,' he said to the jailer, 'take him back to prison; put him in irons; shut him in a cell alone; suffer no man to speak with him. Let no one see him, not even his own wife.'

On Saturday before St. James' Day, Pearson, Marbeck, and Filmer, were brought back to Windsor jail. Testwood, bedridden with gout, was brought into his cell on crutches.

The charges made against these heretics were now reduced to form. Pearson was accused of having laid his hand on the Bible and said in one of his sermons:

'This is the Word; this is the bread; this is the body of Christ.'

Testwood was accused of having said, when a priest was lifting up the host:

'What! wilt thou lift him so high? Take heed: let him not fall.'

Filmer was accused of having said to his brother: 'If that be God, I have eaten twenty gods in my time.'

Marbeck was accused of having written:

'The elevation of the host is the similitude of setting up calves in the temple of Jeroboam.'

A court was held. Windsor was not rich enough in slaves to supply Gardiner with a jury. Tenants of the chapel, holding under the dean, were brought from distant parts. A farmer, living near Abingdon, was chosen foreman. One by one, the prisoners challenged all these strangers, asking to be tried by men of the town, who knew them and their ways of life. These challenges were overruled. How would they be tried? Pearson replied:

'By God and His holy Word, and by the true Church of Christ.'

'It is a pity,' shouted Simon, 'that this fellow hath not been burned long ago.'

All four were sentenced to be burnt; but Marbeck was reprieved. Faggots were piled in the meadow, under the deer-course, just below the Tudor tower. Pearson and Filmer walked from

their prison to the stake. Testwood limped on his crutches, with a little help. On coming to the stake, Pearson, putting his arm about the pole, breathed fervently these words:

'Welcome, my own sweet wife! This day shall thou and I be married in the love and peace of God.'

When they were bound with cords, a lad who knew the churchwarden handed him a can, asking whether he would like a drink. 'Yea,' said he, 'and thank you;' but he handed the can to Pearson first. 'Yea, brother Filmer,' said the preacher, 'I pledge you in the Lord.' Testwood also drank. Then Filmer, taking back the can and putting it to his lips, cried: 'Be merry, my brethren. Lift up your hearts to God. After this sharp breakfast, I trust we shall have a good dinner in the kingdom of Christ.'

A group of priests and canons came out in the August sun to see the martyrs die: among that crowd was the Vicar of Bray. On fire being put to the faggots, Testwood drew the straw about his feet, while Pearson wound a sheaf about his brow. 'This is God's hat,' he whispered, 'now am I drest like a true soldier of Christ.' In fifty minutes, priest, churchwarden, chorister, were

cinders. Turning from the smoke and stench, the Vicar of Bray went home with one fixed idea—never to offend a bishop who could burn him at the stake. But other passions raged among the crowd; passions that found vent in groan and curse, set teeth, clenched fist, and long-drawn breath. To men who were neither papist nor calvinist, these burnings were no other than judicial murders, and the aiders and abettors of those murders were consigned by popular sentence to the ever-burning pit.

Gardiner intended to go on, but he was suddenly pulled up. Cardine, and others, who were threatened by his thirst for vengeance, ran to the king, and told the story of his Windsor tragedy so well that Henry's wrath was stirred, like that of his people who had seen the sufferers die. 'Under my Castle walls!' Cardine dwelt on all the details of the scene. 'Alas, poor innocents!' sighed the king. Orders were sent to Gardiner forbidding him to show his face at court. It was a question whether Bonner should be brought before the council. Messengers rode to the Fleet with orders to release the prisoners under charge. Surrey went home. Haynes returned to his Windsor lodgings. Hoby resumed his duties in the King's house.

Simon was arrested, tried for perjury, set in the pillory, carried through the streets, and pelted by the crowd with rotten eggs.

As Surrey left the Fleet, Wyat and Pickering were discharged from prison. Surrey produced his Satire on the London Citizens :

'O member of false Babylon,
The shop of craft, the den of hire,
Thy dreadful doom draws fast upon ;
Thy martyrs' blood by sword and fire,
In heaven and earth for justice call.
The Lord shall hear their just desire,
The flame of wrath shall on thee fall.'

His midnight raid was not in vain—not all in vain. Reading his Satire in the light of those flames under his Castle wall, the king was smitten with a sense of shame. The stews were there ; standing under Gardiner's windows, licensed by the church. He ordered them to be swept away.

CHAPTER XVII.

A ROYAL REFERENCE.

1543–6.

In autumn, by the king's desire, Surrey set out for France; but Windsor, now a part of his poetic life, was seldom absent from his thoughts. The vision of the Castle haunted him, not as a place of arms, but as a sylvan scene. Riding about the foreign camp, he sang:

> 'When Windsor walls sustained my wearied arm,
> My hand, my chin, to ease my restless head,
> The pleasant plot, re-vested green with warm,
> The blossomed boughs with lusty ver y-spread,
> The flowered meads, the wedded birds so late,
> Mine eyes discovered. . . . .'

Windsor was the inspiration of his muse: the hill his sacred mount, the park his sacred grove, the prison-vault his sacred cave. In each he had sought his muse; and wooed her in his rage and

pain. Of him, as of so many more, it might be said, he learnt in suffering what he taught in song. Living an easy life, he might have been the finest gentleman at court, but he would not have risen into the greatest writer of his age. Windsor, as a palace, had lent him grace; Windsor, as a prison, had lifted him to a higher plane, and chastened him to a nobler end. In courts he would have proved a brighter Seymour, and in cabinets a wiser Wriottesley, but his countrymen would have lost the exercise of his rarest gift. England had twenty Seymours and a hundred Wriottesleys at her command. She had no second man with Surrey's faculties of tongue and pen. The Norman tower had freed him for his higher tasks.

On his return from France he found the world much changed. Henry was at Windsor. Fair Geraldine was united to her aged suitor. Lady Surrey was at Kenning hall, with his son and sister; so, too, was Bess, though the duke had built a separate house for her. The duchess grew more crazy every year. Mary, the Virgin bride, was reading and writing over much, and leading an ascetic and unwholesome life. Brother and sister had some words; he, irking at Bess Holland's presence in the house; she, calling him a worldly

man, who filled the place with painters, poets, jesters, and musicians. In spite of his adoring wife, the Norfolk house was a divided and distracted house. Duty sent him back to France, where he arrived as marshal of the camp. At Montreuil, St. Requier, and Boulogne, he rode in front, and always in the stormiest press of pikes. Once he was saved by Clere. Once he was shrived for death; on which he sent his last adieux to his wife and little ones. Yet he pulled through, and in a few weeks was again in front, with Wyat, bravest of the brave, in company. At leisure times he wrote. Thus, in 'Good ladies, you that have,' he seems to have put his wife's sentiment in his absence—apparently in her own words from one of her letters—into verse which has a personal interest:

'My love and lord, alas!
In whom consists my wealth,
Hath fortune sent to pass the seas,
In hazard of his health.'

The lonely wife and mother quails in her anxious love:

'The fearful dreams I have!
Ofttimes they grieve me so,
That when I wake, I lie in doubt,
If they be true or no.

'Sometimes the warring seas,
Me seems do grow so high,
That my dear lord, ay me, alas,
Methinks I see him die.

'Another time, the same
Doth tell me "he is come,"
And playing, where I shall him find
With Tom, his little son.'

He rhymed, he fought, he rose to high command. Once he seemed likely to lay down the pen; but his good angels swept between him and his purpose; and, to bring him back to his old scene of inspiration, sent him, once more a prisoner, to his lodgings in the Norman tower.

A note of warning reached him in connexion with his wife. Unable to come home and see her, he prayed the king to let her go to him. He was refused: 'His highness thinketh not best, now that time of service—which will bring some trouble and disquietness, unmeet for women's imbecilities—that your lordship should send for my lady, your wife.' Surrey saw that, in his absence, he was lost to favour. Seymour went out to France, and Surrey, yielding his command, recrossed the sea, with a great trouble in his heart:

'The cureless wound, that bleedeth day and night.'

In Seymour's absence, Norfolk revived his scheme for setting up his brother Tom; but Henry was no longer willing to divide the Seymours. Then the duke turned round, and offered to unite his family with that of the king's brother-in-law. Three matches were proposed. If Tom took the Virgin bride, Surrey's eldest son might take Seymour's daughter, Lady Anne; and Seymour's son, Edward, might have Surrey's daughter, Lady Jane. The king was pleased, but neither Surrey nor his sister Mary would consent. Surrey had other things to say in that quarter; thinking of a time when he and his old enemy might be face to face. 'Trust not thy wit too far,' sneered the aged duke, who parted from his son in a great huff.

'He will lose all that I have gathered up,' sighed Norfolk, when his son retired.

Nor had he better luck with the Virgin bride. Her place, he told his daughter, was at court. She, the king's daughter-in-law, should be near his person, ruling, as others of his kindred ruled. Mary, by her birth and marriage stood much nearer to the king than Anne Stanhope. But the mourner closed her ears. Her heart was dead; and when her father pressed her with the weight

of his authority, she turned on him, as though he were forcing her into a crime! A little of her mother's madness sometimes stirred within her brain.

Surrey sent a challenge to Seymour, who, instead of fighting, told the king that Surrey wanted to kill him for his faithfulness to the prince. He begged that Surrey should be put in ward. If he were put in ward, Seymour assured his majesty that proof of his guilt would soon be found ; but no man's mouth would open while the powerful traitor was at large. Thus, Surrey was committed to the Norman tower.

Henry spoke to Surrey. Haughty with the favourite, Surrey was docile to his sovereign ; and in telling the duke of his son's offence, Henry told him that the offender's bearing towards him was one of great respect. A prudent father gave his majesty thanks : 'I am glad my son used himself respectfully, and I pray God he may often remember, and not trust too much to his own wit.'

Wriottesley undertook the case, and spies were instantly set on their dirty work. What man would win a bribe or feed a grudge by peaching on the poet?

Bess Holland had a tale to tell. Surrey she

said, was in the habit of wearing the royal arms, or something like the royal arms; and he had backed his father in his scheme for marrying the Virgin bride to Tom, and placing her near the king. One Warner, living near St. Paul's, deposed that he had heard a person say, that Surrey had put this question:—'What if he were accused to the king of saying, If God should call the king to His mercy, who were so meet to govern the prince as my lord, his father?' Rogers, an informer, stated that he had heard of Blage (the false accuser) having had some speech with Surrey. Whether Surrey had spoken to Blage, or Blage to Surrey, he was not aware; but he had heard that Surrey had said he 'thought his father meet to be the prince's guardian;' on which, as he had heard, Blage had replied, that 'he trusted never to see that day.' Surrey, he had heard, had answered, 'You are hasty; but God sendeth a shrewd cow short horns;' to which, as he had also heard, Blage had retorted, 'Yea, my lord; and I trust yours shall be kept so short as you shall not be able to hurt with them.'

Seymour deposed in person that Surrey had threatened to kill him, and to kill his wife; that Surrey had tried to draw him on to fight; and had

said in the presence of many persons, that when the king was dead, he would quickly shut him up, and his wife too.

What could a lawyer make of such chatter? One point he might make. His majesty was sick and touchy. Nothing so kindled him into rage as hinting that his health was failing. Tattlers had been locked in ward for saying his majesty was not looking well. More than one fellow had been hung for spreading false reports of his death. The phrases put into Surrey's mouth, implying that the king must some day die, would rouse his ire, and when his blood was up no man could say where he might stop. But Wriottesley had little more to rest on. Never had so poor a case been laid before the king. Use and misuse of the royal arms? That question had been settled years ago. Guardian of the prince? It was no treason to assert that such or such a man was fit to be the governor of a child. Could anything be added to these scraps?

Rogers was employed again. This time the informer living near St. Paul's, was able to remember, that he had heard of one Carew, who was said to have said, that the duchess of Richmond had opened to him a strange business:—that her

brother, 'pretending the face of a marriage to have succeeded between Sir Thomas Seymour and herself, advised her, what time the king's majesty should send for her, she should so order as neither to grant nor deny what he would will her to do, that he might have to send for her again, and so might cast some love unto her.'

By putting a foul construction on these words, said to have been said, Wriottesley made up a case; not a charge in form—for he had law enough to see that no indictment could be drawn on evidence so vague—but in the way of question and surmise. Three of his questions and surmises were so drawn as to touch the king:

1. If a man use a coat-of-arms which he ought not to wear—what that importeth? 2. If a man advise his daughter or his sister to become the king's harlot—what that importeth? 3. If a man say, Should the king die, who shall have the rule of the prince, save my father and I?—what that importeth?

Two of his questions and surmises touched the king's brother-in-law and that brother-in-law's wife:

1. If a man say of a man or woman, If the king were dead, I would shortly shut him up—

what it importeth? 2. If a man shall declare such matters as he heareth touching the king, and shall after be continually threatened by the person accused to be killed or hurt for it—what it importeth?

Henry perused this paper of legal quibbles with his utmost care; scored many of the words; added some others with a view to clearing up the sense. His majesty found nothing to offend him in either Surrey's words or Surrey's deeds. Seymour and Wriottesley had done their worst, but they had failed to convince his majesty that there was any case to try. On full consideration of the facts, he sent a message of his favour to his captive in the Norman tower. A day was fixed for Surrey to go out; and, in a postscript like a lady's, Henry invited him to Hampton Court.

Surrey had been harshly used, but he had found a solace in his pen. *Laid in my quiet bed*, the *Golden Mean*, and other works, belong to this period of his life, and were probably written in the Norman tower. On reading Henry's message, Surrey broke into a chant of victory; a strain in which every word throbs like a pulse:

'The storms are past; these clouds are overborne;
And humble cheer great rigor hath represt.

For the default is set a pain foreknown,
And patience graft in a determined breast.
And in the heart, where heaps of grief were grown,
The sweet revenge hath planted mirth and rest:
No company so pleasant as my own!'

The clouds were blown away; rigour was replaced by cheer, though it were humble cheer; the days of his restraint were numbered; and his heart, of late so heavy, was at peace. The loneliness of his cell was gone; and now that he was free, no company seemed so pleasant as his own. Nor were the lines that followed of less personal interest:

'Thraldom at large hath made this prison free:
Danger well passed, remembered, works delight.
Of lingering doubt, such hope is sprung, pardie,
That nought I find displeasant in my sight:
But where my glass presented unto me
The cureless wound that bleedeth day and night.'

This wound was his recall from France before his work in that country had been done. Seymour had stepped in, to close the war, and rob him of his fame. Here lay his burning misery—to have been robbed of glory by a coward:

'To think, alas! such hap should granted be,
Unto a wretch that hath no heart to fight!'

Peace was signed with France, and great am-

bassadors were coming over for a festival in honour of that peace. Surrey left Windsor to attend the festival of peace at Hampton Court, where he was treated by the king and by the two princesses with the highest courtesy. His place was marked out next to Mary and Elizabeth. Looking on the scene at Hampton Court, Odet de Salvè, the acute French resident, reported to his government, that Norfolk and his son Surrey seemed to be masters of the realm.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HATCHMENT DOWN!

1546–7.

NEVER had Surrey's shield looked brighter than a month before his fall. While he was dancing with Elizabeth—now recognised as royal and legitimate—Henry was sickening to his death. Already he had ceased to sign his name. Soon, he was unable to read. Papers were laid before him, but he hardly knew what they contained. Nothing but suspicion of each other hindered Seymour and Wriottesley from doing what they liked. When they agreed, they had the seals and services at their command.

On one point, if no other, puritan and papist were agreed: Surrey and his father must be cut off bodily before the king expired.

Surrey was with his wife at Kenning hall. His sister kept one wing, in which apartments

were fitted up for Bess. Lady Surrey was expecting to lie-in at Candlemas; and her husband wanted to be near her when her time came on. His part of the house was filled with wits and artists. Junius held a post in his household; Streets came down to him on a professional tour. Surrey sat to Streets for the portrait which is now at Arundel. One day, he rode to Norwich, 'to review the belfry and dormitory' of Christ Church. He reported them 'unserviceable to the church, saving as a memory of the old superstition.' Being a reformer, he thought these relics of papistry should be pulled down. Belfries were falling in every shire; the bells and building-stuff being given to friends of light, as abbeys and abbey-lands had formerly been given to friends of light. He asked for those of Christ Church. He had spent his means, he said, in the king's service. These bells would help him to clear his score. The money, he promised, should be spent 'with the old zeal.'

Streets was busy on his picture, with Bess Holland watching his progress, and reporting to Wriottesley day by day. Dressed in a black suit, turned up with silver, Surrey was painted with his arm on a broken shaft. Two female figures

held up shields, one shield bearing the arms of Gloucester, the second those of Edward the Confessor. Bess heard the poet give an order for Streets to paint those shields, and on the following day Wriottesley was acquainted with the fact.

Surrey was suddenly called up to court. Expecting mischief, he wrote to his servant Ellis, 'at the White Lion, in Lambeth,' with a letter for his cousin, Mary Shelton: the young lady whose love affairs had been so fatal to Queen Anne.

'Kenning Hall:
'*This Wednesday.*

'It will be three or four days or Catlyn Tom shall bring you money. I pray you deliver this letter with all speed to Mistress Hevingham, whom you shall find at Jerome Shelton's house in London, or else will be there within three days. Command the painter to leave out the tablet where my Lord of Richmond's picture should stand. For I will have nothing there; nor yet the tablet, but all daubed.

'H. Surrey.

'Deliver this letter to none but her own hands. Haste, haste! Haste, haste!'

Spies were already on the watch, and Surrey's note to his servant fell into the hands of Southwell, one of his old comrades, who had secretly gone over to the men in power. Southwell sent it to Wriottesley and Seymour—with this hint: 'May it please your good lordships to examine Mrs. Hevingham, late Mary Shelton, of the effect of the earl of Surrey's letter sent unto her; for it is thought that many secrets have passed between them, before her marrying and since.'

On his arrival in London, Surrey was called before the council, and accused by Southwell of 'malice.' Surrey, denouncing that witness as a perjurer, offered to prove the lie on his body. Southwell had a right to mail, and Surrey, in his scorn, not only proposed to give him his coat of mail, but to fight him in his shirt. Seymour, who was bent on ruining Surrey, not on punishing Southwell, had the two men placed in ward—on the pretence of keeping his majesty's peace.

Norfolk, hearing of his son's arrest, wrote to his old colleague, Gardiner, for news; on which that prelate, smarting under his defeat in the Windsor business, carried the duke's note to Seymour. Hoping, not only to haul down Surrey's hatchment in St. George's choir, but to obtain, with the

earl-marshalate, a residence in the Devil's tower, Seymour gave orders for the duke's arrest. Henry was dying, and he saw his way to settle matters with the powerful father no less than with the aspiring son.

On Tuesday, December 8th, father and son were carried to the Tower, where, ignorant of each other's neighbourhood, they were lodged by the lieutenant, Stomore, in adjacent cells.

Surrey had two keepers, but no servant of his own. His cell was bare. A bed was bought; some 'king's plate,' kept in the lieutenant's house, was lent to him on hire; a blanket and a quilt were added, but his imprisonment was ordered to be 'close.'

Seymour and Dudley now spurred to Oatlands, where the king, nursed by Fair Geraldine, was lying sick. Too blind to see, Henry had to take their tale on trust. Gate, an officer who stamped the king's name, was bought; and after the two ministers had got their signatures, he returned with them to Ely house. On Sunday they arrived. Gate and Southwell started for Kenning hall, to seize what evidence could be found there—pictures, papers, witnesses—anything that might be turned against the prisoners in the Tower. Next

evening they reached Thetford, where they took the local troops, and started at midnight on the road to Kenning hall. At dawn they had the gates and passages in their hands. No men were in the house. Lady Surrey, with her youngsters, lay in one wing: Mary, the Virgin bride, in the other wing. The party asked to see the young duchess. Mary was in bed. They bade her rise and come to them at once. Startled in the winter night, she rose and came to them; 'a woman sore perplexed, trembling, and like to fall down,' said the intruders on her rest. Quailing before the strangers, she dropped on her knee, and offered to tell them what she knew. But she had nothing to reveal. She loved her father, and thought him a faithful subject; she wished well to her brother, but she noted him as 'rash.' Not a word was said about either her father or her brother having urged her to become the 'king's harlot.' The inquisitors ordered her to start for town in company with Bess. Then they stalked into Lady Surrey's chamber, where she lay in delicate health. Her nurseries were in a second room close by; there lay little Tom, with his brother Harry, and their sister, Lady Jane, a wonderful and witching group : one, to become the

lover of Mary, queen of Scots, and to die for her sake; the second, to become a rival of Bacon and Cecil; and the third, to shine as one of the female ornaments of Elizabeth's court. The visitors broke on this helpless group. No one at Kenning hall had heard of Surrey's arrest. Gate and Southwell were the messengers of evil; and the countess felt that, like her husband, she was a prisoner in their hands. They seized Streets' picture; they examined desks and papers; and they ransacked all her cabinets. Yet they found 'no writings worthy to be sent up.'

Vexed by this failure of evidence, Seymour told his messengers to break up the household, separate the children from their mother, and to drive the ailing lady from her home. These orders were obeyed. The boys and girls were carried off. Then Lady Surrey, forced into a coach, was driven away; a black night-gown, 'much worn,' being 'put about her,' to protect her and her unborn infant from the winter frost.

Stewards, bailiffs, servants of all kinds, were taken up. Some of these men were fined, and some imprisoned. Terror reigned on the estate. Quarrels of the alehouse, bickerings of the market-place, were opened up. Loans and debts, arrears of rent

and bills for fodder, occupied the council ; yet no evidence was found that bore on the poet's conduct towards the king. Wriottesley, at his wits' end, proposed to put this infamous question to his prisoner : 'Have you at any time procured your sister, or any other woman, to be the king's concubine or not ?'

But Paget, one of the secretaries, though working in Seymour's interest, kept his head cool enough to see the folly of putting a question in that form. Surrey would answer No, and bring his sister on the scene. Paget was no fool. The thing that Wriottesley imagined was out of nature. No man in his senses could believe that Norfolk, premier duke of England, had intended to debauch his own child ; no man in his senses could believe the king so lost to shame as to indulge his passions with the virgin widow of his own son. No ; if Surrey was to be entrapped, the question must be put in some vague and subtle shape. Paget proposed this form : 'Have you at any time procured any person to dissemble with the king's majesty, to the intent that the same might grow into his favour for the better compassing of your purposes ?'

True as truth, Surrey might well have answered,

Yea; meaning, that like his father, he had wished his sister to return to her old place at court, where she might share the influence exercised by Seymour's wife. But forms, however crafty, failed. The charge of 'harlotry,' first breathed by spies, and eagerly taken up by Wriottesley, was dropt. What, then, remained? The coat-of-arms.

Should the king die, Surrey would be free; not only to square accounts with Southwell, either in his shirt or otherwise, but with the 'coward' who had set that traitor on. Yet how was Wriottesley to proceed? A quibble, worthy of the pettifogger, came into his head. Unable to prove that Surrey had no right to use his coat-of-arms, might he not ask the jury to affirm the fact that Surrey bore that coat? Here was an issue to be put. Had Surrey caused the shield of Edward the Confessor to be painted on his portrait—yea or nay? Streets' picture was in evidence. No jury could refuse to answer, Yea; at least, no jury to be pricked and handled by himself. That such a painting was high treason was for him, and not for them, to say. Of course his quibble led him straight to murder; but the time had passed when Wriottesley could be stayed by fear of committing crime.

His line laid down, his work was quickly done.

On Saturday, New Year's Day, he issued his precept for a return by the grand jury of Norwich to this query: Was Henry Howard, Knight of the Garter, otherwise earl of Surrey, guilty of painting the arms of Edward the Confessor on his shield or not? The return was to be made at Westminster within a week.

On Monday, January the 10th, he named a special commission to try the prisoner. The chief commissioner was himself, with Seymour and Dudley as his partners. Thursday was to be the time, Guildhall the place. Gresham was to draw the panel, with a special eye to the jury box.

On Thursday, when the court assembled, Wriottesley produced the finding—which he called the 'sentence'—of the Norwich grand jury. Silence being called, Sir John Gage, Constable of the Tower, was summoned to produce his prisoner. Surrey stept into the hall, dressed in black velvet richly wrought.

'Prisoner at the bar! what say you—guilty, or not guilty?'

'Not guilty.'

Leave was asked by the crown lawyers to read the finding of the Norwich grand jury, which was

instantly granted by the bench. Then came the question to the prisoner in the dock:

'What have you to say to the said felony, and how will you acquit yourself thereof?'

Finding that his 'felony' was assumed, Surrey answered, haughtily:

'I am not guilty, and I place myself on the country.'

Gresham was the 'country.' He and his brethren of the jury found the prisoner guilty of wearing his coat-of-arms. The question of his right to do so was not raised; the finding of his jury only certified the fact. Wriottesley assumed that his painting his coat-of-arms on a picture was high treason, and he sentenced him to death: 'Let him be taken back to the Tower from whence he came, thence let him be led to Tyburn, and strung to the gallows till he be half dead; then let him be cut down, his bowels torn out, his head cut off, his limbs divided from the trunk, and stuck on poles as the king's highness shall direct.'

By closing his court, Wriottesley prevented Surrey's answer being heard; by burning the records of his trial, he hoped that no man in times to come would know what had taken place.

On Wednesday, Surrey was carried from his

cell and murdered on the block:—Fifteen days later the king was dead.

Few, except his murderers, saw the poet die. They meant to bury him and his name in silence, under mounds of calumny. They hauled his hatchment down at Windsor, thinking they had wiped out 'Henry Howard, Knight of the Garter.' But the poet lived—and lives—in spite of favourites and chancellors. His stall was long remembered in the choir as that of 'the gallant Surrey.' Like the tower in which Chaucer slept—the gallery in which Shakespere played—the room in which Surrey sang will be an object of veneration to the end of time.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PEOPLE'S FRIEND.

1547.

Towards evening, on the morrow of St. Valentine's day, a hearse, drawn by eight strong horses hung with palls, headed up Castle hill, and wheeling on the left flank, turned under Henry the Eighth's gate into the lower ward. That hearse contained a royal corpse.

Canons and choristers stood ready to receive the body and begin the rite. Gardiner and Bonner, robed in full pontificals, waited on the western steps, while Cranmer and a group of prelates gathered by the altar of St. George. Crowds filled the wards and lined the streets. Not many persons in the crowd had seen a dead king brought to Windsor; sixty-four years having passed since ground was broken in the north aisle to receive the dust of Edward the Fourth. Once more a

king was to be laid in the royal vault; a man of pomp and show, whose obsequies were on a scale to outshine all that had been done in former times.

Crowned with an imperial diadem lay an effigy of the Tudor prince: an effigy arrayed in crimson robes, with crown and sceptre, wearing that collar of St. George, in which, as in himself, the red rose mingled with the white. On each of the eight horses rode a child, dressed in symbolic robes. Peers, knights, and gentlemen, swelled the train; a cavalcade so long that when the hearse drew up in the lower ward, the riders in the rear were fully three miles beyond the bridge. All the great officers of England seemed to have fallen into rank; yet shrewd observers noticed in that company some strange and ominous gaps. Where was the uncrowned king? Where were that king's two sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, now recognised by law as, next to him, claimants on the throne? Where was the lord chancellor? Had Surrey's murderers begun already to divide and fight?

Brought into the choir, the corpse was laid by the mourners near an open vault, and after much singing and more censing had been done by priest and acolyte, Seymour and his friends

retired to sup, leaving the late king's ashes to the care of guards and priests.

At supper, Seymour consulted with his creature Gage and other of his partisans. Next day, the old king must be buried, the new king proclaimed. Many new patents must be drawn and sealed. Seymour insisted on being made a duke. To get the strawberry leaves, he must offer coronets to his rivals in the council. Browne was sick. Paget was inclined to wait; for while Norfolk lived, he was unwilling to share the lion's skin. But Wriottesley and Dudley must be satisfied. Seymour detested them, but they were strong enough to insist on terms. One held the seals, the other had the fleet. Nothing could be done without them:—therefore, they must be bought —until the time arrived when one by one he should be able to put them down.

First, as the People's Friend, next, as the king's uncle, Seymour wanted a Protectorate. Wriottesley objected, both on personal and on public grounds. Henry had named sixteen executors of his will. Cranmer stood first and Wriottesley next. As Cranmer took no part in lay affairs, Wriottesley expected to preside—in fact, to occupy the foremost place. That was, he

thought, his due. No less urgent was his public protest. Seymour leaned to the extreme Puritans, whose 'sour faces' and nasal twang he affected in his look and voice. Under his protectorate, what was likely to become of the papal party? Here, the Puritan and the Papist were front to front. Wriottesley had few followers; and crafty men, like Paget, thought the Puritan had the better chance. Seymour had no doubt, for he had with him 'the hearts of the poor.' Liberty was his motto: he desired to do men good. In order to do men good he claimed to be protector of the realm. Wriottesley opposed this claim; no such office, he contended, was created by the king's will, and a protectorate had always proved disastrous to the realm. Seymour stormed at him—a creature of his own, whom his hands had made! Wriottesley affected to give way, but he retired to his own house in Ely place, believing he was master of the game. The seals were in his desk; without them nothing could be done.

Seymour and his friends at Windsor felt that, for the moment, Wriottesley was strong in his possession of the seals. The patents must be passed, and only Wriottesley had the power to pass them. When a government was formed, the

seals might be recovered; till then the papist chancellor must be coaxed, even at the cost of coronet and belt. A time would come, when coronet and belt would not enable him to retain the seals.

Dudley was of greater weight, with readier means of bringing his enemies to book, than Wriottesley. Having the fleet, he had the river and the capital under his control. Gage, as constable, held the Tower; Seymour, as earl-marshal, held Windsor Castle; but the two positions on the river hardly made Seymour safe. Dudley was as much a soldier as a sailor, and his reputation with the country bands stood high. The guards had not been much with Seymour, who had been mostly counted as an enemy of the fighting men. If Seymour claimed to be the People's Friend, Dudley, with much more reason, claimed to be the Soldiers' Friend. It was no secret in the anterooms, that bets had been made in court and tavern that if the two men ever came to blows, Seymour would be deserted by the guards. Dudley must be bought.

And there were others to be satisfied; each man in his degree; according to his power of doing Seymour harm. Among these others, stood his

brother Tom, the graceless sinner who had more than once made offers to the Virgin bride. Tom was his sorest care. Though worthless, he was still a favourite. The young king liked him; for he spoiled the lad by romping with him, telling him funny tales, and giving him coins to spend. Elizabeth liked him; for his merry ways were pleasanter in her sight than his brother's long face and nasal drawl. Catharine, the queen-widow, favoured him. Even in this hour of mourning, Tom was pushing two intrigues; each in Seymour's eyes presumptuous, if not criminal. He was making love to both the late king's daughter and the late king's wife. Elizabeth kept him off, but Catharine seemed to be throwing herself into his arms. Tom could not be overlooked; the new king's uncle must be made a peer; but Seymour shrank from the trial of giving his graceless brother the coronet of an earl. Tom was put down for a barony, that of Seymour of Sudeley; and to give him place above other barons, it was proposed to make him admiral—when Dudley had been persuaded to resign that post.

Next day the king's remains were lowered into the vault. Seymour broke his wand of office; Heralds proclaimed King Edward the Sixth, and

trumpeters in the rood-loft welcomed the new reign through their silver horns. Not waiting to see the grave closed up, Seymour took horse and rode to Ely place, where Wriottesley, softened by his offer of a coronet, sealed the new patents for his colleagues and himself.

Eighteen days later, Wriottesley was in prison, stripped of his seals, replaced in his marble chair. The Calvinists were now in power.

Bonner fell next, and Gardiner in a few days followed him to the Fleet. Lady Suffolk, walking down the street, and seeing Gardiner at his prison window catching a breath of air, cried out to him: 'Ah, bishop, it is merry for the sheep when the wolves are shut up!'

The Windsor prebendary—if not the Windsor chorister—was avenged.

Dudley stood off, and let the Calvinist and Catholic fight their fight. His own opinions leaned, like Seymour's, to the Calvinistic side. The fall of Wriottesley was welcome to him; but he had no hand in bringing it about. Towards Norfolk he was much the same—a waiter on the times and seasons, with a definite end in view, and ready to march on any road that led him towards that definite end. Conscious of great abilities, he looked

on Seymour with contempt, and hoped some day, in spite of his connexion with the king, to thrust him down and occupy his place.

Stripped of his great offices, Norfolk remained a prisoner in the Tower. No trial had been held; but in the late king's dying moments he had been attainted by his peers. 'Haste, haste!' the council had exclaimed; in haste a bill had passed the Lords. Too ill to sign his name, Henry was supposed to have pressed his 'stamp,' authorising Wriottesley and Seymour to assent in his name to that attainder. Dudley had held aloof from what appeared to him a desperate game. That night the king had breathed his last, and the authority of his commissioners had ceased. Gage, though servile to the Seymours, dared not go the length of murdering a premier duke. No warrant for the execution had been signed. Wriottesley had pressed the Constable to proceed, but Gage had held his own, and his more cautious policy had prevailed. Norfolk was an aged man. Foul play might lead to risings in the shires. By leaving him alone they might have all the benefit of his death without a murder. By cutting him off, they would replace him, as pretender, by an innocent child. It was a rule of policy, older than the

oldest peerage on the roll, to set aside attainders in the second generation; so that if the old man were removed by violence, the boy might be expected to regain his rank, his office, and his estate.

Thus, seeing no way to murder him without imperilling their plunder, they allowed him to remain alive.

Browne died within the year, a simple knight, leaving Fair Geraldine a widow; soon to become the wife of a far nobler mate—that Edward de Clinton, sailor, soldier, statesman, under Queen Elizabeth—who reposes by her side in the southern aisle of St. George's choir.

Tom, now Lord Seymour of Sudeley, might have done much better than attack the widowed queen. His marriage to her majesty gave offence. While he was stealing to the queen's house for trysts with Catharine in the shadows of her elm-trees, he had made a fresh attempt to win Elizabeth. The girl had answered him in simple terms. Her eyes, she said, were blind with tears; a long time she must mourn in black; she was too young to think of love; and such a thing as marriage had not come into her thoughts. Less wise, less womanly, had been the queen. Catharine was neither young nor inexperienced; she was thirty-eight years old,

and had outlived three husbands. Yet this widow of thirty-eight allowed an impudent young man to visit her in the dark; to steal by secret roads to her in evening hours; to whisper nonsense in her ear, while the tapers were yet burning at Windsor round her husband's corpse. She promised him her hand, but begged him not to press her farther till her time of mourning had gone by.

Elizabeth's refusal reached him on a Saturday, on the following Tuesday Catharine was his wife.

Haste so indecent gave offence, not only to pure-minded women, but to busy and ambitious men. Tom broke her heart, but no one pitied her. On her demise the scapegrace sought Elizabeth again. Here the Protector felt his danger. Dudley, wishing to regain the post of admiral, which had been spirited from him, worked on Seymour's fears and jealousies, till the wretched Tom was hunted to his death. Standing on the scaffold a convicted traitor, with the axe above his head, Tom cursed his brother and expired.

Dudley and Seymour were alone—the Soldiers' Friend in arms against the People's Friend.

CHAPTER XX.

ST. GEORGE'S ENEMY.

1549.

In spite of his lodgings in the Devil's tower, Seymour had a great dislike to Windsor; and in spite of his knightly badge and mantle, he had a strong aversion to St. George.

Surrey had made the Castle odious in his sight. Each tower, each gate, each garden, spoke to him of Surrey—of the man whom he had slain. Orchard and chapel, tilt-yard and tennis-court, were aglow with sentiment, all flowing from his victim's pen. Turn where he might, the name and power of Surrey seemed to meet him in the face. The tower in which he lodged as earl-marshal was the property of his victim's family. Surrey had slept in his bed and written in his room. On any change of policy at court, that lodging might return with the earl-marshalate to Surrey's son.

A sour fanaticism, which he mistook for piety, led him to discard St. George. All saints, he said, were idols; agents and ministers of the Evil One. A Calvinist, he could have no part in them, nor they in him. Sterner than Testwood, he tried to strip the aureole from prophet and from evangelist. To him, no man was holy, no man pure. For him the dragon and the dragon-slayer were the same: relics of a superstition to be trodden under foot. So far as in him lay, he used his offices at Windsor to suppress the name and to defile the legend of St. George.

After his abrupt departure from the king's grave, Seymour had never once come back. Choir and hall had been deserted by the court. Once only had the knightly festival been held: in the first months of his protectorate, before he had felt secure in his high place. Even then he had permitted Dudley to preside as deputy. Dudley had been well content; for as a sailor and a soldier, he understood the value of St. George in fleets and camps. Years rolled round; no second festival was held. The fanatics rejoiced; but men who were not fanatics resented this omission as an insult to the national flag. St. George's cross was England's banner, and St. George's day was Eng-

land's festival. The knights were injured, and the people shocked, by a neglect which seemed to all unpatriotic and to some, profane. Yet Seymour held his course; styling St. George the 'adversary,' and treating his legend as a jest. St. George's altar was defaced, and his patronage of the order set aside. Down to that hour the great fraternity of knights had been the Order of St. George. Seymour drew up new statutes, in which the Order of St. George was henceforth to be the Order of the Garter, and the patron saint of England was to have no further part on the royal mount.

He changed the saintly badge, no less than the saintly name. In place of the dragon-slayer, he put in 'a mounted man,' with sword and shield; the sword-point balancing a book. His new shield bore the motto *Fides*, his new sword *Protectio*, his new book, *Verbum Dei*. Some Georges with these Calvinistic figures and devices are extant.

'What is this saint whose day you keep?' the young king asked a knight.

'A saint who outs with his sword and stabs the dragon with his lance.'

The Christian hero, in whose name so many

English hosts had rushed to victory, became under the Protector's rule a theme for jokes.

But Seymour's reign was drawing to an end; and by the irony of fortune, his protectorate was to close at Windsor Castle, under the shadow of St. George.

One autumn night, attended by clouds of horsemen bearing torches, Seymour reached the Castle gates, and bade the officers on duty open them 'in the king's name.' The king was at his side, coughing and crying in the bitter night. The gates being opened, he rode into the upper ward, where he dismounted, under the pinnacles of St. George's hall. First he disarmed the guard, and put his sentries by the South porte and at the Norman gate. Surprised, the men gave up their bills and axes. What were they to do? Here was the king, and the Protector speaking in his name. Their duty was to yield; but they were not the less amazed. Why were the sentries being changed? Passing by the stair into the gallery, Seymour dispersed the royal servants, took away their staves, and set his own men at every door. The servants wandered up and down, pulseless and broken, if not silent, under this surprise. A band had come on them like thieves in the night, but

whether they were thieves or not, no one could say.

These things occurred on Sunday—Seymour's lucky day. For weeks past he and Dudley had been fronting each other, ready for a spring. Each had a party at his back; Paget and his friends going with Seymour, Clinton and his friends going with Dudley. Edward was a tower of strength to Seymour, but the country was on Dudley's side.

At daybreak Seymour looked on his defensive lines. His purpose was to keep his nephew in his power, to raise and arm the country, and to crush the lords who held for Dudley by an overwhelming force. Letters were written, messengers sent out, and placards posted in the shires. Lords, knights, and yeomen, were summoned to the king's standard. Hill, the lord mayor, was ordered to despatch a thousand men to Windsor. Dudley and his comrades were denounced as refuse from the dunghill—upstarts fitter to feed hogs than meddle in affairs of state. Plotters and rebels, they were going to kill the people's friend, and then bring in the devil and the pope. 'Good people,' ran one of Seymour's placards, 'in the name of God and King Edward, let us rise in

all our might to defend the lord protector!' While he waited for these aids at Windsor he looked into his defensive lines.

So many years had passed since Windsor saw an enemy at her gates, that wall and tower were utterly unfit to stand a siege. Yet sap and mine, followed by a brisk assault, were likely to be tried. Dudley was a fighting man; his blood was up; and his assault of Norwich, after every other man had failed, told Seymour what he must expect. Yet when the alarmed Protector looked to his stores, his long neglect of Windsor stared him in the face. Armoury and fuel-house were empty. Neither guns nor powder, neither beef nor biscuit, were at hand. The stables had been drained. Arms and drill had been discouraged, and the Castle was too weak for self-defence.

Would his supports come up in time?

Few words of hope came in. Messengers were returning every hour, but hardly one brought in a cheery word. London was said to be arming fast, but rather for the lords than for the king. Men on whose swords he counted either put them up or offered them to his foe. In vain he cried out, 'Liberty! liberty!' In vain he strove to rouse the poor against the rich. At Windsor,

every one disliked the enemy of St. George, the fanatic who had swept away their festival, the demagogue who had set the churls against the knights. Not a man came in with either meal or malt. Yet larder, buttery, and bin were empty. Hardly a room in the King's house was furnished; hangings, beds, and tables having all been carted off. The Castle was a wreck.

In bringing his nephew to the royal house, he fancied he was making terms with fortune:—'If they mean to kill me they shall also kill the king.' On looking through his stores, he felt that he might very soon have to starve. Casting his trouble on the lords, he knitted up his brows and swore:—'If they mean to famish me they shall also famish the king.'

Anne, his wife, descendant of Plantagenets, had run away. While he was mounting in the court-yard of Wolsey's palace for his ride to Windsor, Anne had slipt to her cabinet, snatched up such stuff as she and her maids could carry, stolen to the river-side, and stepping into her barge, had dropt to Kew, leaving the desperate intriguer to his fate.

Dudley, who knew the state of Windsor, left his enemy to starve; aware that, in a day or two,

he must beg for terms. More pressing messages were sent to Hill. 'Send up the thousand men to Windsor, with supplies of every kind.' Hill, after taking counsel with the lords, refused to send a man or even a loaf of bread. No fighting peers came in. Vainly his agents ran about the city, crying, 'Liberty! liberty!' The wardmen only laughed.

In his despair, Seymour appealed to Dudley. They had once been friends, he said, and he had never intended to do his old companion any harm. True, he had often threatened him, but his words had been idle words, and he had never dreamt of acting on them. He hoped his enemy would think of those better times when they had been good friends. Paget, writing on Seymour's part, took a yet lower tone. The scales, in truth, were falling from every eye. Windsor had proved to be a trap. Dudley pushed up his forces to Windsor bridge and in to the Little park. Seymour was his prize.

Paget reported in the Protector's name that he was ready to submit, to give up all his powers, and only bargained for his life and liberty.

Hoby, the man who had so narrowly escaped a Windsor stake, negotiated the affair for Dudley. Bitter were the moods of Seymour, but his former

colleague was a man of stone. So far as Seymour could be driven, Dudley was resolved to drive. To open the Castle gates, and allow the troops to enter, were but details ; he must separate himself from the king, he must resign his seat at the council, he must publicly confess his guilt. For Edward's sake, his blood might be spared, but he must undergo imprisonment, trial, and condemnation. Short of death, no bitterness should be spared.

When Hoby told him all, he shrank dismayed. Was Hoby certain they would spare his life ? 'My lord, be not afraid,' said Hoby ; 'I will lose my head if you have any hurt.'

Wingfield, captain of the guard, marched in, and going up into the King's house, took the Protector prisoner, and put him under watch and guard.

Next day the lords came in. Edward, ill of his cough and scared by his uncle's fall, consented o what they asked. Seymour, hustled from the King's house, was lodged in Salisbury tower. Next morning, messengers came in from Dudley to inform him that his government was at an end.

The day was Sunday—his lucky day!

The tower in which he heard this news was Salisbury tower—the house of Salcott, chancellor of the Order of St. George.

CHAPTER XXI.

LADY ELIZABETH'S GRACE.

1554.

One evening, near the end of May, in the second year of Queen Mary's reign, Norreys, a royal usher, led a queen's litter, borne by sixteen men in buff, up Castle hill. A crowd stood round the gates, expecting to see the queen. For weeks past carpenters and furnishers had been busy in the King's house, making ready for a royal visitor —Don Philip, prince of Spain. Mary was coming to Windsor on her way to meet the prince, her future husband; but the queen's hard face and jewelled stomacher were not seen behind the veils.

In place of her wrinkled highness sat a lady in the flower of youth, a simple robe about her form, and rings of golden hair across her neck. Her cheek was pale, her figure wasted, and her port, though lofty, had a tinge of awe—like that of one

who stands in the near front of death. So Lady Jane, the Nine Days' Queen, had looked, three months before that date, when walking from her prison lodging to the block.

Seymour's 'affections' had run their course; Mary's affections were now to run their course. The Calvinists were out, the Catholics were in. One persecution had brought on a counter-persecution. Temperance—Sister Temperance, as the late king loved to call Elizabeth—had to wait her time.

A band of horse enclosed the royal litter in a square of swords and pikes. The men were loud of voice and gross in speech—a gang of rake-hells gathered from the city slums and stews. Bedingfield, their captain, was a brute, who seemed unconscious of the lady's rank, and even of her sex. She was his prisoner, and his business was to hold her fast. Bedingfield had a name to keep. His father, had been jailer to Queen Catharine at Kimbolton. He was not a man to let his family laurels fade. Youth, beauty, suffering, stirred no pity in his heart. He had his orders; he was bound to see those orders carried out. Elizabeth understood the man, and felt for him neither fear nor hate—nothing, in fact, but an immeasur-

able scorn. To such another rogue, when trembling at her feet, she afterwards replied: 'Fear not; I have something of the lion in me, and I make no war on mice, and such small things.' What troubled her now was the assassin's knife. The previous morning, when she saw him for the first time, she had caught the ominous name of 'Pontefract;' and this man's brutal face called up to her a vision of Sir Piers, the murderer of his prince.

Turning under Henry the Eighth's arch, Norreys wheeled his party to the right, and halted them at the deanery. The men in buff set down their load, and Lady Elizabeth's grace stepped out. Pointing to a stair dropping into a sunken garden, Norreys invited her to the dean's house, where she had been appointed to remain in custody that night.

Oglethorpe, the dean, was a priest of pliant will, who could be hot and harsh when he was kindled by religious zeal. For years past he had held a canonry in Windsor, and had taken part in every change of creed; one year praising the Six Articles, next year damning the Six Articles; one year swearing to the supremacy, another year denouncing the supremacy; one year preaching the real presence, another year denying the real pre-

sence ; but through all these changes he had been always eloquent on the winning side. The Church was full of priests like Oglethorpe ; men to whom truth was dear, but not so dear as liberty and life. Oglethorpe was a reed, and not a rod ; a man of the hour, living for the hour, and sailing with the wind and tide. Mary, finding him of her own mind, had moved him from his canon's lodgings to the dean's house, and given into his charge the registers and relics of St. George.

Cool, homely, and retired, his lodging might have seemed to Elizabeth a haven of repose, if Bedingfield's rascals had not lounged about the wards and slopes all night—in her eyes, messengers and ministers of death.

'Tanquam ovis,' she had sighed that morning to the women of her household, when they parted on the river bank at Shene ; they sobbing and wringing hands towards her, while Bedingfield was forcing her into his barge : 'tanquam ovis'—like a lamb to the butcher's knife!

Such, she imagined, was her fate, even though the blow might not be struck that night. Once in the deanery at Windsor she felt safe. Oglethorpe, though a courtier, was a priest, and bound to preserve his sanctuary from the stain of blood.

Had violence been meant, Bedingfield would not have brought her to the deanery. Her lodging was on sacred ground. Not so the previous night at Shene. There, she had slept in the palace, and at parting from her officers she had said to them: 'Pray for me! pray for me! This night I shall have to die.' But here, she lay under the protection of Our Lady and St. George—celestial guardians, whom the new queen had restored to their pre-eminence. For one night she was safe; but she was wholly in the dark as to what the morning might bring forth. Why was she taken from the Tower? Why were her cooks, her tire-women, and her chamberlains removed? Why was she surrounded by these men-at-arms? Why was she hurried in such haste? They had rowed her to Shene and carried her to Windsor without a pause. Her pulse was low, her litter out of gear. To jolt along the road was painful, and might end in killing her. Sick when taken to the Tower, a close imprisonment had wasted what was left of her enfeebled strength; yet, she was told that, by her sister's orders, she must rise at dawn, and take the road as soon as daylight served.

Which road? Was she, like Richard of Bordeaux, being sent to Pontefract?

Mallets were heard in the upper ward, and workmen pattered in and out through the Norman gate. Nine weeks hence, Don Philip, prince of Spain, was to arrive at Windsor, husband of the queen and master of the realm. His coming was to be her ruin, and the birth of an Anglo-Spanish prince the signal for her death. Renard, the Spanish agent, wished her to be taken off before the prince set sail; anxious to see her dead, yet no less anxious that her blood should not be laid at his master's door. 'Have done with her,' he whispered daily to the queen; 'have done with her before the prince sets out; while she remains, he cannot safely go on board.' Gardiner, again in power, was ready for the crime. His eagerness and energy knew no limits. More than once, he had tampered with her food; more than once, he had stretched her servants on the rack. His lips had dropped the ominous name of Pontefract. One day, he had sent an order for her execution, but the Constable had refused to act on any warrant not signed by Mary's hand. Mary had not dared to sign. In her uncertainty, she sent to Philip for advice.

But Philip paused. About to sail for England, he was coming to meet Elizabeth's countrymen.

She was their darling, the embodiment of their hopes and passions. Men were dying for her daily; soldiers like the younger Wyat and his Kentish neighbours. Philip was afraid to make such men his personal foes, as he must do by counselling Mary to an act of violence. Were Elizabeth gone, his way in England might be smoothed; but not if she were known to have been put away on his advice. London was on Elizabeth's side; Howard and the fleet were on her side; a large majority of peers and knights were on her side. The day of an attempt on Elizabeth's life might be the last of Mary's reign. Even if the deed were done in secret, England would be up in arms next day. Should he survive these perils, what might not happen to him on the day of Mary's death? Philip was not a brave man, and the boldest gambler with his sword in Europe might have faltered at the thought of standing by Mary's grave, surrounded by a crowd of peers who held him guilty of Elizabeth's blood.

Philip had left the queen to follow her own device.

Elizabeth put no trust in Philip. Renard, she thought, must know his mind; and she was satisfied that Renard had sent her to the Tower,

in which he hoped to have murdered her, as he had murdered Lady Jane. Was her removal to Windsor on her way to—heaven knew whither—done by Renard's counsels, offered in Don Philip's name?

Once in his boyhood Philip had dreamed of her as his future wife; but lust of sway and greed of treasure had enticed him from the beautiful but crownless girl. Years had fired that lust, increased that greed. All manly sentiment was gone, and not one touch of either love or pity lingered in his heart. Elizabeth knew him. If her murder suited him, he would nod her privately to the block. Nothing but fear—which he called policy—would hold him back.

That she had friends, Elizabeth was aware, and every day brought in fresh evidence. Advocates sprang up for her in the city, in the fleet, at the council board, in the fortresses, and among the guards. She had only to show her face, and raise her voice. Seeing her in the Tower, Arundel, the Constable, had become her man. Listening to her at the board, Clinton, the Admiral, had become her man. Not many hours ago, she had made a convert of Thame. A Catholic, and one of Mary's peers, Thame was a man enjoying her majesty's

unbounded trust. The previous night he was at Shene with Bedingfield, when Elizabeth's usher, frightened by the look of things, ran up to him and asked him point-blank, as a gentleman, whether the princess was in peril, so that he and all his men might do their duty to her grace.

'God forbid that any such wickedness should be intended,' said the Catholic peer, looking at the man and seeing what he meant; 'but if so, my men and myself will die at her feet.'

London was making holiday; the citizens supposing, when they saw her on the previous morning in her barge, that she was going up the river to her country-house. Salvoes of artillery had greeted her from the bridge and from the banks. 'What is that noise?' asked Mary, startled by the boom of guns. 'Those guns are being fired, your majesty,' said an attendant, 'by the citizens, on the freeing of my lady Elizabeth's grace.' A sinking of the heart had overcome the queen, who, knowing her own intentions, staggered to her cabinet, shut herself up, and showed her face no more.

Elizabeth found no easy slumbers in the deanery; yet her sleep was less disturbed than that of Mary in her palace. Bedingfield's crew

were bad enough, but they were not so terrible as those saluting guns.

Waking at dawn, Elizabeth found the apple-trees in blossom, and the horsemen ready to resume their march. Norreys and his men in buff were waiting at the middle gate, under the shadow of St. George's keep. The litter was not mended, but Elizabeth, scorning to waste her words on trifles, sprang into her seat and threw the curtains open, so that every one might see her as the escort bore her off.

Across the ward and down the hill they bore her, through a crowd of men and women—men who cheered her with their shouts, women who threw flowers into her lap, and held up their little ones to salute her grace. The rake-hells tried to press these people back; but down the street, across the bridge, and up the road past Eton college, Bedingfield's fellows had to fight their way through storms of people cheering for Lady Elizabeth's grace.

CHAPTER XXII.

QUEEN MARY.

1554.

The cheers for Lady Elizabeth's grace were only dying out when Mary came to Windsor, with her chamberlains, her waiting-women, and her confessors, to prepare a welcome for her spouse.

Mary was not unpopular in the town. In early days, before her father kept a conscience and her mother had to fight for her position as his wife, she had been much at Windsor. Here, she had been dandled on her father's knee, and taught to hold out baby fingers for ambassadors and cardinals to kiss. Here, she had crowed at her first morrice dance, clapt hands over her first bull-bait. Here, she had received her icy suitor, Charles the Fifth, and pledged to him her girlish troth. In villages round the Castle, she had visited the sick, made offerings to the saints, and stood

sponsoress to peasant girls. No sooner had she gained the throne, than she had restored the Windsor saint. Seymour's misdeeds had been undone. His statutes had been burnt, his entries in the registers erased. Norfolk, quitting his prison, had returned to Windsor and resumed his stall. The altar of St. George had been refitted, and his services resumed. Once more the festival of chivalry had been held in state.

Such acts were loudly praised, and under Mary Windsor was herself again: shrine and head-quarters of the national saint. Annoyed by one extreme, men were being carried to the other extreme. Seymour had prepared a way for Pole.

A daughter of Spain—an elder sister of Santa Teresa—Mary was moved by mystical and unseen powers. She had, in her belief, a message to deliver, and a mission to fulfil. She was a vessel fashioned and selected for a sacred task. That task was to restore the Church. No sooner had she gained the throne than monks and friars, who had been silenced and unfrocked by Seymour, crept from their hiding-places to proclaim the advent of a new virgin—a second Mary—sent into the world to be the mother of a new Messiah. Pole, her cousin, wrote to her in language which

implied that in mounting the English throne she had become the bride of Christ:

'Consider what shame it were for the Lord and spouse of your soul, if, having come to your grace, that you and all the world might see Him, you turn back, lamp in hand.'

Harpsfeld, one of Bonner's chaplains, after showing how religion had been planted by the first Mary in Israel, declared from his pulpit that the second Mary had a right to cry with the Virgin of Nazareth, 'Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.'

Though listening eagerly to such expressions, Mary was conscious that a son must come to her as to all wives and mothers, by the avenue of natural law. Who, then, should be her spouse? Not of a carnal heart, wooed by the charm of household life, but solely from a sense of duty to her Church, was she inclined to mate. A noble duty must be nobly done. What man was worthy to become the father of her son?

Part of her council, thinking of their country rather than of Rome, advised her to marry Courtney, one of the princes of the house of York. Mary had found him in prison, and had set him free. Fifteen years' imprisonment had left

him pale and weak; the shadow of a man, with the timidity of a girl. He was eleven years younger than the queen. Gazing at his pallid cheek, Mary desired her councillors not to press her into such a match. He was 'a boy.' Her own heart rather turned towards Pole, another representative of York. Pole was a holy man, and of befitting age. Born within the century, he was sixteen years older than herself; but he was hale and strong, and had a handsome face. More than all other men, he seemed to her worthy to become her spouse. Agents of the papal court were asked whether Cardinal Pole, a deacon, not a priest, would be allowed to marry—for the good of holy Church. But Pole, though burning to appear in Westminster as cardinal and legate, shrank from these inquiries and proposals of the mystic queen. 'Nay, nay; I am too old,' he answered. He had learned, he said, to live alone, and could not enter on domestic ties. No words could bend him; if he might not come to England as a cardinal, he said he would not come at all.

Refused by Pole, she had turned to her first suitor, Charles the False. Charles had broken his plighted word; but he was free again; and in his years, at least, he was no older than her

cousin Pole. True, he was anything but a holy man; but he professed repentance for his outrage on the Pope; and Rome regarded him, in spite of his offences, as a champion of her right. Might not a messiah spring from the union of a pious queen and a penitent emperor? Charles, on hearing of her fancies, sneered in his frosty way:

'Marry that dropsical old maid!'

At fifty-four, Charles had no fancies left, except for clocks. His hair was white, his knees were swollen. To cross the floor he had to hobble on a crutch and stick. With one foot in a cloister, what to him were crowns and coronets? He was flinging them away—the crown of Austria to Don Fernando, that of Naples to Don Philip. Messiahs might be wanted at Windsor; but his part was chosen; which, from that day forward, was to sit on chairs and wind up clocks.

Mary had the mortification of seeing both her cousin Pole and her cousin Charles prefer a cloister to her love.

Yet, on the threshold of San Juste, Charles had preserved his worldly sense. That which he sneered at for himself, he saw would suit his son. Don Philip was the heir of many kingdoms; but the crown of England was no trifle, even to a

man who owned the duchy of Burgundy, the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, and was heir of Spain, America, and the Eastern Indies. Charles offered her his son.

Mary was surprised. Don Philip was 'a boy' of twenty-seven ; she was not only thirty-nine, but looking ten years more. No, no ; Don Philip was too young. In her feeble health, she could not undertake to live a young man's life. Renard removed her scruples by a hint that such a man as Philip had advantages over men of middle age, like Pole and Charles. If young, he was pure of heart. This argument told on Mary. Whether young or middle-aged, her husband must be good. Here was a man both young and good. Renard put everything in the fairest light. Day after day, Don Philip's name, Don Philip's image, and Don Philip's virtues, sank into her soul. Sly hints and pretty jokes were buzzed abroad, and month by month she grew familiar with the picture of a young man sitting by her chair, crowning and consoling her with his perfect love.

One day Howard, the admiral, noting her pensive face, crept behind her chair and whispered something in her ear, at which she deigned to smile. 'What do you think I said?' he asked

Count Egmont, who had come to sign the articles. 'Nay,' interposed the queen, 'you shall not tell.' But sailor-like, he rattled on gaily: 'I have told her that I hope very soon to see some one sitting by her side in that empty chair.' 'How can you say so?' she exclaimed, the scarlet on her cheek and brow.

The prince, her coming spouse, was in no fever. Only the most formal compliments came from him, and he never deigned to write.

'Why does he not write to me, his spouse?' sighed Mary, with a twinge of jealousy.

Renard, vexed by his master's lack of courtesy, invented messages, and carried them to Mary in his name. The queen was easily deceived, and no less easily alarmed. One day she was startled by a hint from one of her women that Don Philip was no saint! Sending for Renard to her cabinet, she questioned him sharply:

'You are sure the prince is good?'

'A paragon of men, your majesty.'

'You speak the truth—not like a courtier who is bound to please, but like a man?'

'You shall take this head if I deceive your majesty in the prince.'

Possessed by frenzies and illusions not uncom-

mon in old maids of thirty-nine, she closed her eyes and ears against report. Having signed the articles of marriage, she came to Windsor to prepare the prince's chambers; but her heart misgave her fifty times a-day.

'No, he will never come,' she sighed, in Renard's presence.

'Yea,' said the agent, tenderly. 'In no long time your majesty shall have him in your arms.'

Lying on her couch, she started from her sleep and put these queries to her women: 'Tell me, I pray you, am I not growing old? Is not my figure falling off? What think ye? When he has seen me, will he then like me?'

She had not been used to love, she said. Till she was crowned, her heart had been an icicle. No dream of love had ever visited her pillow, nor had her fancies fixed themselves on the face and figure of living man. But she was bent on doing her duty to the Church, and having agreed to marry Philip, she had come to love him as a wife should love her spouse. That made her fearful lest he should not love her in return.

At length her good young prince came over, and the virgin of thirty-nine rode from Windsor to greet him on his landing, marry him on his

journey, and bring him as her bridegroom to the royal house.

A lovely summer evening saw a cavalcade arrive at Henry the Eighth's gate; the king and queen in front; ambassadors, prelates, noblemen on the flanks; knights and gentlemen in the wake—a stirring and historic throng, all picture to the eye, all parable to the mind. Philip and Mary were the king and queen; Egmont, Renard, Michiel, were among the ambassadors; Cranmer, White, and Gardiner were among the prelates; Alva, Horn, Mendoza — Derby, Pembroke, Arundel — were among the nobles. Clouds of horsemen closed the ranks; soldiers from many countries, ambling side by side; men who in after days were to cross swords in many a headlong crash by sea and land.

It was a gathering of two empires and two causes for a day of truce, held on the pretext of a marriage rite, under the auspices of a martial saint.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GRAND MASTER OF ST. GEORGE.

1554.

Before he sailed from Spain, Don Philip had been elected one of the Windsor knights. On landing he had been invested with the badge and collar, which he wore on his wedding-day. To Mary he gave a Spanish charm and amulet, in the shape of a black enamelled ring. He wore her collar and she wore his charm. She wished to make him her Grand Master of St. George.

On Castle hill they halted for a speech. The mayor was long, the king perplexed. Not understanding English, Philip attempted to touch his hat; but he was new to popular courtesies, and people noticed that his arm seemed stiff. In Spain he had never taken notice of salutes, but Renard had warned him, as he loved his safety, to beware of seeming rude. 'These English are a quick and

mettlesome lot,' the minister wrote, 'ready with word and blow, and apt enough to lunge before they speak.' Soft words and gracious smiles, Renard had told him, would go far with the islanders; and Philip, though disliking to be civil, had already learnt to say, 'Good-night, my lords,' and 'Thanks, my lords.' But touching caps to mayors and smiling graciously on mobs were things more difficult for him to learn.

Mary pricked forward through the lower ward, and halted at the western door. Though hot and dusty from her ride, she pushed into the church, wishing her spouse to be installed that night. Cranmer led the way, followed by the queen and king—who had already burnt him in their hearts. Alva walked close to Philip; so near, that he appeared to be acting sentinel. Was he on guard? If so, on what account? Was the queen's spouse in peril of his life?

Alva thought so. Mary indulged her fear, and Renard more than fear. Care had been taken to protect Don Philip from assault. His name, his cause, his race, were one and all unpopular. His coming into England as king-consort was regarded as a national disgrace.

Outside, a section of the Catholic party, no one wished to see a Spaniard on the throne.

Mary had sounded her warning note. Before he sailed from Spain, she had begged him to bring over his own cooks, his own cellarers. In her own house she could not guard him from the risk of having poison dropped into his food and wine. When going on board his ship, he had received a note from Renard, warning him not to land in England without a shirt of mail under his jacket, lest some English dirk should find a passage through his ribs. Yet cooks and shirts of mail were not enough. 'Bring out a guard of musketeers,' Renard had also said; 'but let them be disguised as pages and serving-men, since otherwise they will never be allowed to land. Each lord should have a company, with their weapons hidden in his luggage.' Philip had not been slow to follow good advice; and Charles, his father, had selected the most brilliant soldier in his kingdom to command these pages in disguise. Alva had been, in fact, intrusted with the safety of his son. Cooks, cellarers, musketeers, were all at Windsor in Don Philip's train. No drop of English wine had passed Don Philip's throat, nor had the Spanish shirt of mail been taken off. His men

had kept his chamber-door—stout warriors in the dress of pages, able and ready to repel attacks. Alva regarded Philip as a visitor in the enemy's camp.

That he had enemies among the Windsor knights, was true; that he had enemies in the household and among the populace, was no less true. Rightly or wrongly, he was held to be Elizabeth's foe, and every man in England, save the extreme Papist and the extreme Calvinist, was Elizabeth's friend. What had become of her? Halted at Woodstock, she was guarded in that palace with a rigour no less sharp than had surrounded her in the Tower. On Philip fell some portion of the blame. Reports were current that her life still hung on Philip's nod. It was a dangerous situation for the king. If aught went wrong at Woodstock, Arundel's sword was not the only weapon that would have gone through Philip's heart. Clinton, Bedford, Pembroke, Derby, would have sided with the princess, and the date of any attempt to do her injury might have been the last day of his life and reign.

On mass being said, Mary took Philip to the chapter-house, where she hung the mantle on his shoulder and put the collar round his neck.

Coming back into the choir, each knight in turn strode up to the altar, and laid his offering on St. George's shrine.

Though injured and defaced, the Windsor shrine had never been destroyed. In other towns, images had been broken up and cast into the flames; but those of Windsor had escaped. Our Lady, thanks to Testwood, had a broken nose; but George of Syria had been able to protect himself. When ordinary saints seemed lost, the lord of chivalry had been strong enough to keep his seat.

The stalls, indeed, were greatly thinned. Charles and his brother, Don Fernando, king of the Romans, held their places; so with Henry of France and his great Constable, Anne de Montmorenci; but the ranks of English knighthood had been ploughed and furrowed by the knife. Against their oaths the knights had slain each other; not in the field, sword crossed by sword, but at the council-board, and at the judgment-seat. Seymour had put Surrey to the axe, and Dudley had put Seymour to the axe. Norfolk in turn had sliced off Dudley's head. Paget and Parr had been expelled. Gardiner had lost his place as prelate of the Order. But her majesty had filled

her stalls once more with knights. Winchester and Oxford, Derby and Arundel, Sussex and Pembroke, Bedford and Westmoreland, sat in their places near the king and queen. One venerable knight was absent from the scene:—Norfolk, who lay at Kenning hall on a couch from which he was to rise no more. His public life was closed. His son's chief enemies in the grave, and all the honours of his house restored, he had no more to do on earth, and at the age of eighty he was ready to give up his badge together with his ghost.

The service done, the queen saluted Don Philip with the title of Grand Master of St. George.

This term was new at Windsor. Foreign cities and societies understood the word. At Rhodes the Hospitallers had a grand master; at Toledo the Knights of Calatrava had a grand master. Philip was grand master of two Spanish orders: that of Calatrava and that of Santiago. The brethren of St. George had no superior save their sovereign. Was her majesty's going to transfer the sovereignty to this Spanish prince? Don Philip was grand master of the Golden Fleece, but only in his sovereign right as duke of Burgundy. By law, Mary was sovereign of

the English order. Was she bent on making over to her foreign husband any portion of her sovereign right? Jealousies were roused in many minds.

Mary led her husband from the chapel to the King's house, followed by the peers and chamberlains of two hostile courts. The day was Friday, on which beef and capons were forbidden things. High feeding had to be postponed; a little fish sufficed to stave off hunger, and the good young man—inside his shirt of mail—retired to his apartment in the Tudor tower.

In what mood had he entered Windsor? In a mood of anger and resentment, such as the queen's father had expressed on seeing Anne of Cleves. Philip had been led by false reports to think of Mary as a fair, plump lady in the prime of life, with ruddy cheek, blue eye, and pleasant smile. His misery was intense. Mary had taken care that he should see her first by wax-light. As the time was summer, and the days were long, she had put off sending for him to her cabinet till ten o'clock. Thirty hours after that first meeting, they were man and wife. When he had light enough to see her, she appeared to him a freak

of nature, neither man nor woman, but a parody of each. A head too big for her frame was topped by a beetling brow too heavy for her face. Her eyes, of whity-grey, were fixed into a stare, yet she was almost blind, and when she tried to read she had to press the page against her nose. Bust she had none. Though fair, her skin had puckered at the eyes and wrinkled round the neck. From throat to waist she had the flatness of a plank. Those lines and curves which in a healthy woman hint at nourriture of life, were absent. Swollen by dropsy, her figure rested on feet too vast for a female hardly five feet high. Her voice was loud and rough; so loud that pages in the ante-room overheard every word she spoke inside her cabinet. It was a man's voice, high and rasping even for a man.

Don Philip loathed her from the first. In spite of his great desire to have an English son, he shrank disheartened and disgusted from the presence of his English wife.

And she? On her part, Mary had worse things to endure. The 'good' young man turned out a cheat. Instead of looking handsome and heroic, like his portraits, he was a dwarf; with crooked

legs, a narrow chest, a hanging lip, a gaping mouth, and a protruding jaw. Instead of being good and pure, as Renard had described him, he was a monster of depravity. Though early married and the father of a son—that Carlos whom he afterwards put to death through jealousy—he had kept a dozen favourites, with whom, defying scandal, he had lived in open shame. Besides a stepson in Don Carlos, Mary discovered that she had a score of stepsons whom she dared not mention. But this public shame was not the worst. Don Philip's tastes were foul; he liked to roam about the streets and pick up tavern drabs; yet he had none of that brutal courage which is sometimes found in the most vicious hearts. He was a coward, and was more than half insane.

Yet she was fond of him in spite of all his crimes; and clung to him in her desperate love as though he were a hero and a saint.

On Sunday, when the services were sung, she put him in the highest place. Before he came to Windsor, she had walked before the knights; now she gave way to him, and watched the ritual from her private box. With Philip in the seat

of sovereignty, Windsor appeared to her a part of Spain.

Don Philip thought so too.

Some pages, going into the choir, observed a herald in the rood-loft, tearing down the royal arms. What was he about? He had his orders, he replied, to lower the arms of England and to set up those of Spain. Abate the arms of Tudor and Plantagenet in favour of Castile! Was England a dependency of Spain? Had Windsor fallen to the rank of Lille and Ghent? Some lords came in and heard the news. That herald's work was promptly stayed. Windsor was neither Ghent nor Lille. Had any fresh attempts been made to lower those English arms, Alva and his musketeers would have been quickly brushed aside.

Whether he called himself king-consort or Grand Master, Philip perceived that he must walk at Windsor with a wary step. His shirt of mail would help him little in a rising of the English bands; a thing—his resident told him—as sudden and destructive as a tempest on the English coast. He chafed and blamed his wife; an ugly and unpopular woman, who could not help him to debase the English arms, much less to usurp the English crown!

The 'good' young man looked round to see how he might run away, and leave his consort in the lurch. Excuse was found, and he made off. Except for one brief moment, Windsor was to see no more of her Grand Master of St. George.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DEANERY AND DEAN.

1556.

Balked of her expected son, deserted by her faithless spouse, Mary, in one of her acts of penance, brought a favourite priest, Hugh Weston, doctor of theology, to Windsor, where she placed him near her person in the deanery. Oglethorpe, rewarded for his easy virtue, was translated to Carlisle; and Father Weston, a man after her own heart, became chief of the college, and registrar of the order, of St. George.

The deanery was a monastic house, with two fair rooms, and thirty-seven offices and cells; the work of Henry the Seventh's almoner, who had left his coat-of-arms, with name and date, inscribed on the outer wall:

Christofer Urswick
Decanus
1500.

Resting on the Castle wall, the cells and offices ran along the middle ward, from Winchester tower to Gunner's tower, flanked on the western side by Well court, by the cloisters, and by St. Edward's chapel. A sunken garden opened on a tiny hall, in which stood a screen with valves, bearing the shields and mottoes of the knights. A crypt-like room on the left hand served as registry. One passage led into the cloisters; a second passage, through the registry, into St. Edward's chapel. In the rear, a slit in the Castle wall made a way into an orchard, with a gravel terrace, known as the Dean's walk. Windows, rising above the Castle wall, swept the whole landscape north and west.

Good men and bad had occupied this deanery. Here Urswick had pondered out the details of his master's plots; here Clarke had toiled for the great divorce; here Franklin had contrived the burning of his idol-breakers; yet no dignitary in the line of deans had won such notoriety as Weston, her majesty's penitential choice.

The man had learning of a sort, but his humanities were marred by a foul tongue, an impure fancy, and a thirst for blood. No age, no reverence, awed this priest. Pole and the nobler

class of Catholics shunned him, as a man who brought discredit on their Church; but Mary, sick and morbid, hearing his loud voice, and noting his bold presence, took his noise for piety and his arrogance for zeal. To hear him call the communion-table an 'oyster-bench,' and to compare Cranmer with Julian the Apostate, gave her intense delight. Like Oglethorpe, he was a time-server, flowing with the wind and sailing with the tide; but Oglethorpe was soft in his evasions, while his brother priest was hot and merciless. Oglethorpe was ready to stop short at life; Weston never scrupled at hanging and burning men whose opinions he had shared last year, and might share again next year. Under Henry, he had got the archdeaconry of Cornwall. Under Edward, he had subscribed the new articles, though not in time to please the Calvinists then in power. A prison-cell had brought him to his senses. Willing to submit himself, he had whined and begged for liberty, but he had begged of men as merciless as himself. On coming to the throne, Mary had found him still in jail. He had remained a celibate priest; and Mary, calling him a martyr in her cause, had solaced his sufferings by a place at court. He had no wife, and she was not aware what freedom

he allowed himself with other men's wives. To her he seemed a model priest—bold in reproof of sin, submissive to the crown, and steadfast to the Church.

Left with her ailments, longings, and regrets, Mary imagined that she was forsaken, not by Philip only, but by God. What had she done, what left undone, she asked, that heaven should send her such afflictions? She had burnt a primate; she had burnt seven or eight bishops; she had burnt women and children; she had burnt old men and newly-born infants; she had burnt the blind and lame, the leprous and insane. What more was left for her to do? Why had she called on Heaven in vain? Lowlier women were blessed with sons. Less faithful wives retained their husbands' love. Why, of all women, was she cursed by barrenness, and abandoned to neglect and shame?

Some of her confessors told her she was lukewarm in her faith and backward in her zeal. What had she done for the religious orders? Not one abbey, not one priory, had been opened to returning monk and friar. The brethren of St. Francis and St. Benedict were waiting for a word, but not a single cell had yet been peopled by those holy men.

That was a sin, a great and heavy sin. Earth, not heaven, engaged her heart. What right had she to hope for grace? Much had been done against the married priests. A second primate had been clapt in jail; five bishops had been ousted from their sees; scores of married nuns had been divorced and flogged. Hundreds of rectors had been forced to choose between their livings and their wives. Chaplains with concubines,—'women, called wives,' —had been turned into the streets. These things were good; but they were not enough.

Weston had been active in this work of kindling fire. 'Stand back!' he had bawled to a court chaplain at the queen's first mass; 'shamest thou not to do thine office, having a wife? The queen will not be censed by such as thou!' As quick in act, as he was bold in speech, he had snatched the censer and flung the incense round her maiden form. But rooting out the married priests was only part of the amends she had to make. If she would win the grace of heaven, draw back her spouse, and bless the country with a prince, she must restore the monks and nuns: not only to their ancient powers, but to their ancient seats.

She put her hand out softly: housing a few nuns at Avon, a few monks at Greenwich. Growing

bolder with success, she built some cells at Smithfield, and the hoods and skirts were seen once more in Fleet Street and at Charing Cross. But these were little things. Why not restore the monks to Westminster, and let the holy men be seen about her palace and her court?

Weston opposed this change, as going too fast and far, until she tempted him by offers of the deanery of Windsor and the registry of St. George. A champion of the celibate priests, he was no stickler for the celibate monks and friars, regarding them as rivals in the court and the confessional.

For three years he had held his place about the queen. During those years he had done his part, —more than his part, in many a lawless act. He had striven to bring Elizabeth into peril; he had outraged the dying hours of Suffolk; he had hunted Latimer, Ridley, and Cranmer, to the stake.

When Wyat, the younger, standing on the scaffold, in the hour of death, had assured the people that Elizabeth was innocent of his rising, Weston had stood up and shouted, 'Believe him not, good people! For he confessed otherwise before the council.' Later in the day, White, lord mayor, on going to dine at the Bridge house, heard of Weston having challenged the dying man's

words. 'How! is that true? Did Weston say so?' The tale being told again, White had said indignantly, 'In sooth, I never took him otherwise than for a knave!' Bowes, who had sat with Coates on Surrey and Wyat ten years before, dropt in to dine, and hearing of Wyat's words from the mayor, he said he had come from Westminster, where in the House of Commons he had heard that Wyat had accused Elizabeth! Gardiner had found in Weston an impudent and lying tool:—but Wyat's words had been heard by too many people to be turned against her grace.

Suffolk was the father of Lady Jane Grey. In going to his death he had found Weston pressing at his side, and babbling of the bread and wine. Suffolk had ordered him away; but the zealot, pushing up, had faced him at the block. Suffolk had pushed him back, on which Weston threw him down, wrestling with him on the floor in presence of the headsman and the crowd. 'It is her majesty's pleasure that I shall be here,' cried Weston, saying which, he had been allowed to stand beside the block, snarl at the dying man's prayers, and gloat on the flow of blood.

'Forgive me all of you,' Suffolk had prayed, 'as the queen forgives me.'

Weston, in a loud voice, shouted: 'Yea, the queen's majesty forgives him!'

As the axe fell, and the venerable head rolled into the dust, an audible voice had answered Weston from the crowd:

'God send thee such forgiveness!'

Latimer, borne down with years and labours, had appealed to Weston, rather as a man than as a priest:

'I am not able to dispute: let me profess my faith, and afterwards do your pleasure with me.'

'Then you refuse to dispute?'

'I pray you be good to an old man; you may, if it please God, come to be old as I am.'

Latimer was eighty-four, brave and bright in spirit, but feeble in his voice and in his feet. He had lost his Greek, and only half remembered his Latin. For forty years he had been writing and speaking in his native tongue, penning those sermons which are still a treasury of English prose. He had passed the age for quips and quirks in scholarship. But Weston had no reverence for white hairs and failing powers. 'That is false!' he had roared at the great preacher; 'cake-bread and loaf-bread are all one to you. . . . I will be at host with you anon.'

Towards Ridley, once his bishop, he had nursed a peculiar rancour. Ridley, in King Edward's days, had heard him swear to articles, for holding which he was now ready to take men's lives.

'Nay, nay!' he had shouted to his former bishop, 'you make a monstrous answer, and unlearned.'

Weston had sought to work Ridley evil by treating him as the actual author of King Edward's Catechism.

Ridley.—'Sir, I give you to wit, before you go any farther, that I set out no catechism.'

Weston.—'Yes; you made me subscribe to it when you were a bishop in your ruff.'

Ridley.—'I compelled no man to subscribe.'

But here the unblushing Weston had given him the lie directly, in his teeth.

To Cranmer he had been worse than to the bishops; having, as men thought, an eye on Lambeth. He had bawled, and cursed, and given the lie a hundred times. To Cranmer's arguments he had answered, 'You are beaten; you are put down.' Stopping and opening Cranmer's letters, he had refused to let them reach the council. 'If you go to heaven in this faith,' he had sneered at the reforming prelates, 'I will never come thither':—

a sarcasm not so withering as he thought; but he had gained his ends by sending his opponents to the stake.

Such was her majesty's new dean, the champion of her celibate priesthood. Weston at Windsor and Feckenham at Westminster would surely help her with the higher powers!

But Weston was at length unmasked, and by his own superior in the church. Pole had no weakness of the flesh; he knew the dean, and had him watched by spies. They caught him in his sin. Tried by a court of priests, sitting under clerical rules, Weston was convicted of adultery; on which the cardinal stripped him of his deanery, his archdeaconry, his professorship, and his other livings in the church. Weston refused his sentence and appealed to Rome. The cardinal interdicted that appeal, and on the unfrocked priest attempting flight, he tripped him up, and locked him in the Tower.

CHAPTER XXV.

SISTER TEMPERANCE.

1558–9.

TWENTY-SEVEN shillings, paid by the town of Windsor to John Whiteley, for 'a drinking to the clerks when Te Deum was sung,' announced the coming in of Sister Temperance.

Whiteley was innkeeper, swan-warden, what not; owner (it would seem) of the White Hart, and neighbour to Richard Gallis, host of the Garter, two doors higher up the street. Whiteley kept the courtiers' inn; much used by captains, ushers, and commissioners. Jovial were the doings of the new queen's officers under Whiteley's roof. Twenty-six shillings for a dinner at Whiteley's; fourteen shillings for a dinner to Master Norreys; fifty-one shillings for a dinner to Master Nevil and the commissioners; four shillings for a drinking when Master Nevil was here; thirty shillings at

the eating of venison—such entries in the town books, following on each other, tell their own jovial tale.

Whiteley grew rich, and basking in court sunshine merrily, came, like a royal host, to be elected mayor.

Light out of darkness, safety out of tempest, sprang the girl whom the boy-king had called his Sister Temperance; her calm and moderating spirit being averse to all extremes. In dealing with the factions and disorders of her time, Elizabeth had need of temperance.

Five years of Spanish rule—of rule by faggot, torch, and axe—had brought her kingdom to the edge of ruin. Philip's inquisitors had done their part; famine and fire had done their part; and when these ministers of ill had fainted at their toil, pestilence had come to finish off their prey. In a natural sense, no less than in a moral sense, her empire was a wreck. Look, for example, at her bench of bishops. Bishops are a tough and careful tribe, for whom the averages of life run high; yet in a single year two-thirds of the English bench had fallen vacant. No man had perished by the axe, no man had withered in the flames; all had gone down by sickness, swathed and removed

like grass under the mower's scythe. Pole was dead, Gardiner dead; Glynn, Warton, King, were dead; Holyman, Christopherson, Griffins, Hopton, Brookes, were dead. The whole had perished in about a year. Death was abroad in every see. To Mary's dying couch had come the knell of departing souls. Priests, monks, and friars, had fallen round her bed. Of those who stood in the first rank of her inquisitors, her ministers of fire and blood, Bonner was the one man left alive.

Were these the blessings she had brought by rooting out her married chaplains and replacing them by celibate monks?

On riding into London, Sister Temperance found a remnant of her prelates kneeling by the road; waiting to see her pass and offer her their abject homage. In pity, and in policy, she was kind to the old men, and suffered them to kiss her hand; all except Bonner, from whose aspect she recoiled in anger and disgust. Even Temperance shrank from the pollution of his hand and lip. In proud and noble anger she rode onward, and the monster who had cursed and burnt so many martyrs trembled with a foretaste of the stake. But though she silenced him, she showed him a mercy

he had never shown. If pardon kills, Surrey was avenged on his one surviving enemy.

Oglethorpe, veering once again, had the glory of setting the crown of England on Elizabeth's brow.

The persecutors silenced, Elizabeth turned her face towards Windsor and the Order of St. George.

Like all the rest of her estate, Windsor was a wreck. The chapel had no dean, the keep no constable. During Mary's life no constable had been named. The Order had no registrar, no chancellor, and virtually no prelate. Many of the stalls were empty; Philip not caring to increase the rivals of his knights of Santiago and the Golden Fleece. On Mary's death his grand mastership expired. The Great park had no keeper, and the clerkship of the works was held by an underling, instead of by an architect like Bray. Roofs, doors, and windows, were decayed. Pigeons had pecked through the leads, and choughs filled up the pipes. Garden and slope were falling down; orchard and vineyard had come to waste. The prison and the bridge were equally unsafe.

Elizabeth's means were scanty and her hands were full; but she had youth and patience on her

side; and what was done by her was done like work that is meant to last.

As sovereign of the Order, she removed Don Philip's banner to the second stall on the princes' side. Four new knights were made: first, Surrey's son, little Tom, now become fourth of the Howard dukes; second, Henry, earl of Rutland, third in descent from Lady Anne Plantagenet; third, Northampton, Catharine Parr's brother; fourth, Sir Robert Dudley, master of the horse. Norfolk and Rutland were her kinsmen; Northampton was a champion of her cousin Lady Jane; Dudley had been her fellow-prisoner in the Tower.

The ritual required a dean, a registrar, a chancellor. Carewe, first sent to Christ Church, she called up to Windsor, and made him canon, dean, and registrar. Jewel, one of her best preachers, she appointed bishop of Salisbury, and lodged him as chancellor in Salisbury tower.

Her opening service bore a red letter in the annals of St. George. Not only were the English rites restored, but song and service were conducted for the first time in the English tongue. Henceforth the national saint was to be honoured in his highest temple, in the native speech. This happy 'birth of time' occurred two years before Bacon,

five years before Shakespere, came into the world.

Rainsford, one of the queen's servants, stopping her on her passage from the Tudor tower into the great chamber, cried aloud:

'In this good time, when prisoners are delivered, let four others be set free.'

'And who are they?' inquired the queen.

'Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, who have long been shut up in an unknown tongue.'

She answered gravely: 'It were best, Rainsford, to inquire of them first whether they would be released or no.'

Even Bedingfield was able to make his peace, the queen saying to him with her pleasant laugh:

'When I have a prisoner who should be safely and straitly kept, I shall send him to you.'

Weston, a subscriber under Edward, a persecutor under Mary, offered to subscribe again—subscribe, and something more, if only he could win Elizabeth's good will.

At Windsor he had learnt—so he alleged—that Pole and Mary had conceived a plan too impious for belief; a plan for breaking her father's grave in St. George's chapel, tearing up the royal ashes, and committing them to the flames! To dig up

dead men's bones and burn them on a charge of heresy was a Spanish custom. In his own country, Philip had been heard to meet a cry for mercy, uttered by wretches in their black beñitos, with the snarl: 'Out, out! away with you. If my own son were tainted, I would thrust him on the fire.' But no one, even in Castile, had gone the length of violating royal and parental graves. Had Pole, with Mary's license, dreamed of violating Henry's grave? Weston alleged the fact; incredible to human sense, except for certain acts — open and public acts—on which no shadow of a doubt remained. Graves had been broken with the queen's consent. Bucer had been dug up, as a heretic, from the soil of St. Mary's, Cambridge, carried to the market-cross, and burnt to cinders. Catharine Martyr had been dug up from the soil of Christchurch, Oxford, carried to a dungheap, and thrown into a common sink. These acts had been done by Mary, under Pole's authority, in the two chief seats of English learning. Heretics were not allowed to lie in sacred ground.

Windsor was seven times sacred; sanctified by Our Lady, by St. Edward, by St. George, by the Very Cross, by the Holy Thorn, by Good King Henry, and by Master John Shorne. The

odious scenes at Cambridge and Oxford led men to believe that any thing was possible to Pole and Mary—even to the burning of King Henry's body under his Castle wall.

Pole's death, and the collapse of his adherents, put an end to these inquiries. Nothing could now be gained by routing out his plans; enough for Sister Temperance that they had failed.

St. George's chapel was undisturbed, and no more English graves were outraged on the plea of either false opinions or monastic vows. Monks, whether black or grey, dropt out of public sight; the deanery, the cloisters, and the King's house knowing them no more. Service was read and anthem sung in the common speech. The upper and the lower wards put on new faces; for the Spanish gloom departed with the foreign friars, the foreign household, and the foreign prince. Passing from Mary's reign into Elizabeth's reign was like a journey from the Curfew tower to the Tudor tower:—a passage from a gloomy fortalice into a house of light.

Temperance, embodied in a lovely woman, occupied the English throne.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ELIZABETH'S LOVERS.

1560.

Suitors, crowned and uncrowned, sought a share in her majesty's heart—a seat on her majesty's throne; and while the wars with France and Scotland, kindled by her sister's policy, were burning out, she had to smile and listen, and reply in soft, postponing words. She had no friends to spare. Thinking of France and Scotland as her 'natural allies,' she sighed for peace:—'Oh, for the day of peace!' With Spain and Rome she had no hope of peace. With them her battle must be fought, her independence won. To fight these powers with all her strength, she had first of all to free her arm.

Late in the summer days, she rode to Windsor, hiding from her pitiless lovers, till her agents in the courts of Paris and Stirling could agree on articles of peace.

A man was coming over sea, whose hand she had rejected more than once, but with whose family and country she desired to form a league. This man was Eric, king-elect of Sweden; eldest son of Gustavus Vasa, the most eminent champion of the cause which she regarded as the cause of truth, of freedom, and of God.

One of her first acts as sovereign was to send a messenger to the Swedish hero and his son, both of whom had shown her kindness in the past. Vasa revered the memory of her mother; Eric professed a passion for herself. On the arrival of her messenger a sudden light sprang up in that northern zone. 'It is the cause of truth,' said Vasa. 'Yea, it is the cause of love and truth,' said Eric. Father and son began to dream. The north and south were now arrayed against each other; Sweden, Germany, and Denmark, being armed against Austria, Rome, and Spain:—the liberal north against the despotic south. France, divided in opinion, stood between the camps. If England could be gained! A union of the crowns, thought Vasa, would secure the progress of reform. England and Sweden, governed by a common will, might stand against the Emperor and the Pope, shielding the German dukes till they grew strong

nough to stand alone. A union with the queen, thought Eric, would increase his power, and bless him with the loveliest woman in the world.

So dreaming, they sent over Jan, duke of Finland, Vasa's younger son, to whom Eric confided a ring and a letter for her majesty; a ring which had cost him six thousand crowns; a letter inspired by the most ardent love.

He wrote, that he had loved her long, and served her faithfully, without knowing whether she cared for him or not. Since her kind message his heart was fixed, and nothing could lessen his honest faith. But he was eager for more news, in order that his spirit might be raised and his soul at rest. Would she not send some token of her love? Since reading her words, he had neglected business, thinking of her by day and night. If she would write to him one word of hope, he might return to his affairs. The day had been dark for him, but his hopes were brightening up. Jan, his brother, had power to sign a treaty; but he wanted to come over sea himself, and gaze on her with his own eyes. Let her but give him leave, and he would dart on board. Through stormy waves, through hostile lines, through dangers of all sorts and shapes, he should

hurry to her presence, confident that she would never be able to chide him for his zeal and faith.

How much unlike Don Philip's letters to his bride!

Eric was a man of striking figure; tall and sinewy, with his father's eyes and face; looking from cap to spur, a soldier and a prince. His family was popular in the city, in the church, and in the camp. Born in the same year as Elizabeth, Eric was in the flower of his youth. So soon as Jan arrived, all England answered 'Yea,' to his proposals. Eric was a Protestant; his union with the queen would be a Protestant league. A dealer in the city brought out portraits of her majesty and the Prince of Sweden on a single sheet; uniting them in the press before they were yet united by the church. It was a public hope—no more. The queen was grieved; for she was anxious not to wound the Swedish people.

'Anything but that,' she answered; 'anything to show my friendship for the king and prince but that!'

Yet many of her peers and countrymen fancied she would change her mind on seeing the king-elect.

Duke Jan, a lad of seventeen, proved an unskilful herald. Giving himself regal airs, he received councillors seated, and held out his hand for peers to kiss. When they declined, with smiles, he lowered his tone; left off his big looks—his 'pontificialities'—and became a good fellow; but the change, though welcome to his visitors, was too late. Seeing his first blunder, he fell into extremes on the other side. He dressed in English clothes, and took to country sports. He drank and swore, and learned how to whip out his sword in the sudden English style. This quickness ruined him. Received at court, he was often with the queen, who, looking at his boyish face, treated him as a boy. Jan played the fool, and got dismissed. He took the queen's pretty speeches in a way not meant. 'Lend me this ring,' he one day pouted, looking at a jewel on her finger; 'I will only keep it for an hour.' Fearing that he would send it to Eric, she drew her hand back with a warning jerk. Another day he threatened to drive his sword through 'the emperor's man.' As such a fire-eater might draw in the queen's presence, he was soothed with gifts and sent away, taking back with him his brother's costly ring.

The emperor's man was working for the emperor's son.

For five years past England had been fighting on the side of Spain. The war then raging in the Channel and on the border, was a Spanish war; weakening the cause on which nearly all English sympathies were spent. If enmity between England and her neighbour in the narrow seas was to be kept up, Austria and Spain both felt that Elizabeth must wed a Catholic prince.

Which Catholic prince?

Philip's first thought was of himself. The dwarf, with harems in the palace and the street, imagined he might win that peerless queen. Not that he sighed, like Eric, for her luminous eyes:—his thoughts were in the cause. He wrought too craftily for success. In truth, he was no match for her. When she removed his banner from the sovereign's stall at Windsor, he made the mistake, through pique, of offering to send back his George. With feminine courtesy, she prayed him to retain her jewel, since, if he were not grand master, she regarded him as her knight. 'Throw all obstacles in the way of her marrying a subject,' he wrote to Feria, now his agent; 'but avoid committing *me*. Give her some crumbs of

hope. I must consider first.' Then he proposed. 'She must not expect me to stay long with her; I have to live elsewhere.' Feria was to choose his time for showing her these 'conditions.' He never showed them; and the queen lost an occasion for a merry laugh.

On her refusal of his offer, he repressed his anger, and proposed his son Don Carlos. Carlos, a lout of fifteen, ugly and depraved, was engaged to Isabel of France. But Philip, for a bribe in money, married Isabel himself, and left his son distracted by rage and jealousy. This second suit was quickly put aside. Then, Philip suggested Filibert, duke of Savoy. Filibert was an old idea; started six years before, but only to perish in the birth. Ugly and impure of life, the man was a dependant on the Spanish court. Elizabeth would not listen to a renewal of his suit.

Repulsed again, Philip brought up his cousins, Ferdinand, duke of Tyrol, and Charles, duke of Styria. Ferdinand was thirty, his brother twenty; yet Philip had not thought of asking the consent of these imperial princes. There they were, two sons of Cæsar, and Elizabeth, he said, might have her choice.

The duke of Tyrol was a married man, having

given his hand to Philipina, daughter of an Augsburg citizen, and had a son, in that Andrea of Austria, who lived a monk and died a cardinal. Cæsar offered to annul his son's marriage, so that Queen Elizabeth might step into Philipina's shoes. But the young German lady baffled his design. Dressing herself in fine attire, and borrowing a countess's name, she made her way to the imperial court, and threw herself at Cæsar's feet. Raising the beautiful 'countess' in his arms, he asked what troubled her. 'A cruel man,' she murmured, 'threatens in his anger to annul my marriage and to bastardise my child.' He scanned her face—a sweet and innocent face—and pledged his word to shield her from that wrong: 'Who was the man?' he asked. Looking into his face, she answered: 'Your majesty!' The archduke's marriage was allowed to stand; but Ferdinand was reduced from his imperial rank, and sent to live in the mountains with his low-born bride.

Quadra, the ambassador, insisted that Elizabeth should marry archduke Charles. She teased the bishop with assenting smiles, which he imagined must be some day minted into facts. She had conceived, she said, a noble picture of the prince. His birth, his learning, his endowments, placed

him in the foremost rank of men. In age, in person, he left nothing to be desired. She took his offer as the highest compliment. But when Quadra pressed her to give some pledge, she teased him with more words and smiles. She must have time. She had not yet seen the prince. Why had he not come over? Who could say that when he saw her, he might not change his mind? On her side also, there was something in reserve. A lady could not judge a suitor in the dark. Let him, if he were in earnest, come to Windsor. If he were too busy at the moment, they must wait.

Philip insisted still more rigorously than Quadra, on her taking the young archduke. 'Scouted in my own person, I will not endure a second insult in my cousin Charles,' he swore. 'Well,' said Elizabeth, fencing with her mannikin; 'if the emperor will have me wed his son, let him send the gentleman to see me. I am a lady and a queen. It is not for me to bid a man come and marry me.'

Quadra imagined he could take her majesty in a trap. 'The prince,' he said, 'can hardly come till he is sure of welcome;' but she turned his words, and caught him on her point adroitly:

'England is free. All men may come and go. He can come when he likes—unless he is afraid.'

On Jan's return to Sweden, Vasa renewed his suit for Eric:—not for his son, he wrote, but for the cause. Disarmed by age, he said he was unable to serve that cause, as in his younger time. Eric, his son, must take the burthen up, and he implored the English queen to help him with her strength. He begged Elizabeth to receive a visit from his son. If, after seeing Eric, she still rejected him, he should be able to accept her judgment as the award of God.

With fears and doubts, she gave him leave to come; but while he lay at Helsingborg, waiting for his ships to muster, articles of peace were signed at Windsor, and the English queen was free, for the first time, to follow her own bent.

Mistress of her choice, would she consent to share her throne with either foreign prince or native peer?

CHAPTER XXVII.

DUDLEY, CONSTABLE.

1560.

Dudley was rising fast. The queen, who found him in jail, a broken man, tainted in blood, reduced in rank, impoverished in estate, had called him to her council, made him master of the horse, and given him the Garter. But the favour he most coveted was to come. Reviving a famous office for his sake, she named him Constable of the Keep and Ranger of the Park.

Since her father's reign, no constable had been named, and Henry the Third's tower had been put to other uses; now, as a store-house for the king's stuff; anon, as a lodging for the secretary of state. Burghley, when at Windsor, occupied the tower; and Burghley was a minister not to be disturbed. A new apartment had to be contrived for Robin Dudley. Surrey's old prison-rooms were void. If

small in size, they were large enough for an officer whose wife was living in a country-house. After the new gallery was built, they were in free communication with the royal house. As Constable, Robin attended the queen in all her sports—when she was out with her hunters, with her merlins, with her dogs. Some of her people feared that she might one day marry him, and crown him king.

In vain, she told her council and her people that her part was chosen; yet her words had always been precise, and she had given them utterance many times:

'From my years of understanding, I chose this kind of life, which hath best contented myself, and I trust been most acceptable to God.'

It was for her to choose the right way, and to walk in that way with a resolute step:

'This shall be for me sufficient, that a marble stone shall declare that a queen, having reigned such a time, lived and died a virgin.'

Here, cried her critics, was a 'merry' tale. A virgin queen! What man had ever heard—what man had ever read—of such a marvel? Nuns might be virgins; for a nun, bound by religious vows, was a woman dead to the world. But queens were not to be shut up in cloisters, barred

from the approach of men. They had to reign, and how could they avoid the other sex? A virgin queen! What young and lovely girl had ever yet been known to play so droll a part? Queens had seen saints, like Margaret of England; but St. Margaret had married a King of Scots, and done her duty to the realm.

Men who knew Elizabeth saw that she was moving towards a settled point. Her aunt had gone to Stirling with the object of uniting the two kingdoms under a common prince. That object she intended to achieve. Mary, queen of Scots, was now the heiress of Elizabeth's throne. By Henry's will, the Scottish line was barred in favour of the issue of his younger sister, Mary, queen of France; but time had shown that natural right was always stronger in the end than legal right. Elizabeth was moving on the natural line. Her father's will, made under pique, defeated *his* father's purpose of uniting the island crowns under a common head. For twenty reigns that object had been sought, and never with success. Force had been tried, and forgery had been tried. England had over-run the north,—not once, but many times. Princes had been brought into the south as captives; but the Scottish clans had

never yet been broken to the yoke. Once, a just method had been tried. St. Margaret had been given in wedlock to a Scottish prince; and but for the invading Normans, England and Scotland might have been united in St. Margaret's son. That method might be tried again. A duke of Rothesay might arrive at Windsor, though a Prince of Wales might not be able to remain at Perth.

But this design implied a sacrifice,—a free and perfect sacrifice of the English branch. To bring the crown under a common head, Elizabeth must give up the treasures of domestic life.

Few thought her—being a young and lovely woman—strong enough to play so great a part. Some of her advisers were against her policy. They wanted heirs of her own blood; princes of English birth and training, who would understand the people over whom they had to reign. Clinton, Jewel, Burghley, urged her to marry; not because they under-valued union, but because they wanted independence first. Freedom from the Pope was better in their eyes than union with the Scots. Whitehead, the Puritan preacher, spoke the common sentiment.

'I like thee all the better, Whitehead,' said her

majesty, 'that thou livest unmarried;' to which the bluff divine replied: 'In troth, madam, I like you all the worse for the same cause.'

In one event, and only one, Elizabeth might have yielded to her advisers. Mary, queen of Scots, had married Henri, king of France. This match had taken place in spite of her. Should any son be born of that marriage, that son would be dauphin, duke of Rothesay, and presumptive Prince of Wales. Three crowns would be united on his brow, and the two island kingdoms might become dependencies of France. That incident might overrule the queen. She valued unity, but she valued independence more. That England, if inherited by a dauphin, could be retained in thrall like the duchy of Bretagne, no one believed; yet every man foresaw that Englishmen might have to free themselves from that connexion by the sword. The struggle might be long and fierce. A lawful heir, with France and Scotland at his back, was not an enemy for them to court. A man so favoured would have partisans in every shire, and years of strife might pass before his armies were expelled and his adherents crushed.

To save her country from a civil war, Elizabeth might have been compelled to mate.

Since Vasa's death, Eric was in the field again, making yet louder clatter with his suit. Once more, she heard the accent of a man. His love, the Swede declared, was true and constant. His father's death had stayed his coming over, but his own affairs being settled, he was ready to set out. He hoped her 'nay' was not the last word on her lips. To prove his love, he was ready to lay down his wealth and kingdom for her. He would fly to her, and serve her with his life. He prayed her to think of him again; to weigh the benefit to herself and to her country of a Swedish match. He begged her to send him passports, on receipt of which he would sail at once.

No passports were despatched, and Eric could not sail; the councillors having reasons of their own for putting every obstacle in the way of a Swedish match.

Dudley, Arundel, Pickering, were discussed in Paul's walk as suitors to the queen. Which of these three gentlemen would be king? Bets were laid on Dudley, prayers were put up for Pickering. Jewel wrote to Bullinger, that foreign princes were still pressing her majesty, but that the common voice was all for Pickering.

Elizabeth smiled at these pretenders. On her

way to Windsor she had visited Pawlet, her lord treasurer, in his new place at Basing, where, the cheer being good, she had spent some merry days. Pawlet was a favourite of fortune; for, in times when heads were rolling from the block, he had contrived to save his skin and even to keep his place. Son of a country knight of no great means, he had become marquis of Winchester, knight of the Garter, and lord treasurer of England. At the age of eighty-six, he built himself a splendid house. When asked how he had weathered so many storms, he answered, 'by being a willow, not an oak.' Elizabeth liked her pliant servant. After one of the wrangles over her future spouse, she burst into a hearty laugh:

'What a pity that my lord of Winchester is so very old! Else, by my troth, if he were a young man, I would find in my heart to have him for my husband before any man in England!'

Peers, like Howard and Clinton, looked on Robin as an upstart; a 'base peer,' whose family had been knightly in only two descents, and those corrupt in blood. The first Dudley had been executed by the queen's father, the second by the queen's sister. Both had been convicted as traitors to the crown. How could her majesty bestow

her person on a member of that house? Robin's partizans bet on his fine face and on his interest with the queen.

Quick, mercurial, clinging, Robin was a man of courts. His eyes were fine, his features good. In figure, he was straight and graceful. He played well, danced well, sang well; but in qualities of a nobler order he was poor. True faith, pure heart, and loyal word, were not among his gifts. Wise word, or witty, never passed his lips. Cool counsel lay beyond him. Yet Elizabeth liked this sparkling creature, and allowed him more of her society than she gave to Burghley, more perhaps than she gave to Clinton and his wife.

Yet in Clinton's family, she was at home. That family made a curious group; linked closely with her father's house. Clinton's first wife was Lady Tailbois, mother of the boy-duke, whom Surrey had loved so well; his third wife, was Elizabeth, Lady Browne—Fair Geraldine. The first lady had left him three girls; whom the queen liked, both for their own sake and for Richmond's sake. Fair Geraldine, bound to her in blood, had been throughout her dearest friend and bravest advocate.

Arundel, the most pressing of her English

suitors, looked on Pickering as a rival far more dangerous than her master of the horse. Pickering was a handsome and a popular man. As Surrey's friend, he had an easy access to Elizabeth's heart. A soldier and a scholar, he had seen the world, and knew the qualities of men. He was the candidate of truth and light. Jewel wrote to Bullinger that though foreign princes pressed her hard, the common voice ran for Pickering, a 'good' man and a 'wise' man, with a 'royal countenance.' Arundel was so much hurt by Pickering's favour, that he prepared to fly on the first word being dropt in council that his rival was to be king.

For Pickering, he had fear, but no contempt; for Dudley he had much contempt, but not a particle of fear. Arundel knew the queen too well. A peer of vast estate and ancient family—or a man of large presence and noble lineaments—might win the hand for which so many princes sighed in vain; but not a fool like Robin, who, besides the drawback of his poverty and his extraction, had a wife alive.

While he was yet a boy, Robin had made a love-match with Amy Robsart, a romantic school-girl in her teens. Amy was a mystery; no less so in her character than in her fate. The pair had

sickened of each other in their bridal days. On Dudley's arrest, Amy had shut herself up in a country-house, and neither sought him in his misery nor rejoined him after his release. Bruits ran about the court that Robin's love-match was a failure, and that Amy stood in her husband's way. Amy was reported sick; Amy was reported dead. On Amy's death, some people fancied that the Constable of Windsor would be able to make his way into the Tudor tower. 'King that will be!' he was hailed.

He had some claims on her majesty's kindness, of the sort which females seldom overlook. In childhood, he had been her playmate. In her day of trouble, he had been her fellow-sufferer in the Tower. When Mary died, he had sold his land and thrown the price into her cause.

She paid him well, but in the fashion of a queen, by making him her Constable and knight.

When Henri died, leaving no son by Mary to dispute the English crown, Elizabeth, vowed by her policy to a single life, proposed her handsome Constable to the queen of Scots.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SCHOOLMASTER.

1563.

A CABINET at Windsor was the birth-place of Roger Ascham's 'Schoolmaster;' the original of a thousand volumes on the finest of all arts—that of rearing boys into generous men.

Flying from pestilence, her majesty rode to Windsor, as the sweetest spot and purest air within thirty miles of London. She was followed by her suite, her council, and the ministers of foreign powers. Foix represented France, Quadra represented Spain. Foix lay at Eton college, Quadra lodged in Windsor. Cecil, Sackville, Petre, Wotton, were on duty in the upper ward. Ascham, the queen's reader, Haddon, her master of requests, had lodgings in the royal house. Men's thoughts were running on the chance of war. Condé was breaking faith, and Catharine de Medicis, aware of Elizabeth's

love of peace, was pushing her too fast and far. Ships were gathering in the Downs, musters were pouring into Portsmouth, ready to embark; yet Ascham spent his mornings in the queen's privy chamber, reading with her the orations of Demosthenes in Greek.

Cecil, though a busy minister, had a knack of laying down his cares at dinner, and of falling into such talk as sprang from the occasions of the time. One day a notable party gathered round his board; Richard Sackville, Nicholas Wotton, Roger Ascham, William Petre, John Mason, Walter Haddon, and some others. They were men of different minds; Cecil, Sackville, Wotton, men of the new learning; Petre, Mason, Haddon, of the old. Those harped on the new lights; these stood out stiffly for the ancient ways. 'I hear strange news from Eton college this morning,' said Cecil to his guests; 'divers of the scholars be run away for fear of beating.'

Day, the provost, was a wifeless, sonless fellow, who had been chosen provost for no better cause than his passion for a celibate life. His rule was sour, his temper harsh. Cecil expressed his mind. 'I wish,' he said, 'that more discretion could be used by masters, who many times punish

the weakness of human nature rather than the scholar's fault; whereby many scholars, that might otherwise prove well, are driven to hate learning before they know what learning meaneth, and so forsake their books, and be glad to be put to any other kind of living.'

Petre spoke out in favour of the rod. A school, in his opinion, must be governed like a camp. No freedom should be given to boys. The rod was a sword; the only thing to keep up order and obedience in the class. Petre was a Catholic, one of Mary's ministers; but he was willing to conform his policy—so far as might be needed to retain his place. In Elizabeth's presence he was dumb; at Cecil's board he spoke in a hard and hectoring tone.

Wotton replied to Petre. Wotton, a man of low, clear voice, and gentle character, spoke but seldom; but when it pleased him to move his lips, every one listened to his voice. 'In mine opinion,' he observed, 'the school-house should be, in deed, as it is called by name, a house of play and pleasure, not of fear and bondage. So says Socrates in one place of Plato. If a rod bring the fear of a sword, it is no marvel if those that be fearful of nature, choose rather to forsake the play than to

stand always within the fear of a sword in a fond man's handling.' Wotton was an aged man, but he had come of liberal stock, and he foresaw the better time.

Mason took up the word. A mass-man, shrewd of tongue, inclined to laugh at things, he was not the less an advocate for the ancient ways. 'Most boys,' he said, 'were curst, and most of their masters lewd.' Scholars and teachers were bad, and he would leave the floggers and the flogged alone.

Haddon stood up with Petre. Master of Trinity hall, professor of civil law, vice-chancellor of Cambridge, he had vast experience in the schools. Without saying whether he flogged his pupils, he maintained that flogging had led to good results. 'The best schoolmaster of our time was the greatest beater of his boys.' This pedagogue was Udal, master of Eton, and a canon of Windsor. Turner, one of his pupils, had described his canon's system as a good thrashing by way of entrance-fee:

'From Paul's I went,
To Eton sent,
To learn straightways,
The Latin phrase.
When fifty-three
Stripes given to me,
At once I had.'

Ascham, looking up slyly at the great professor, who had got his learning out of the old whacker, said: 'Though it was his good fortune to send from his school to the university one of the best scholars of our time, yet wise men think that came to pass rather by the great towardness of the scholar, than by the great beating of the master. Whether this be true or no, you yourself are the best witness.' Everyone looked at Ascham, and Cecil urged him to express his views at length. Though shy of great people, he explained his theory that children might be lured by love when they could not be driven by stripes.

Dinner being done, Ascham went up to the Tudor tower, where the queen read with him the oration against Æschines. As they were ending, Sackville came into the tower. Sackville, a son of Margaret Boleyn, and the queen's kinsman, lived on intimate terms at court. Like Elizabeth, he showed the literary genius of the Boleyns, and his son, Thomas, had produced his tragedy of 'Gorboduc,' and written his Induction to the Mirrors for Magistrates. The reading done, he caught Ascham by the sleeve, and drawing him to the window, spoke of what had been said at dinner in Cecil's room:

'I would not for a good deal of money have been absent this day from dinner; where, though I said nothing, yet I gave as good ear, and do consider as well the talk that passed, as any one there.'

Ascham, who had noticed his silence at the board, pricked up his ears.

'Mr. Secretary Cecil said wisely and most truly,' Sackville continued, 'that many young wits be driven to hate learning before they know what learning is. I can be good witness to this myself; for a fond schoolmaster, before I was fourteen years old, drove me so with fear of beating from all love of learning that now—when I know what difference it is to have learning, and to have little or none at all—I feel it my greatest grief that it was my ill chance to light on so lewd a master.'

Sackville was thinking of a boy at home. Thomas, his son, the eminent poet, was in Italy, and his little Robin was at Knole. While listening to that talk, a thought had sprung into his mind. No flogging Udal, canon of Windsor and master of Eton, should have charge of Robin.

'God willing,' he went on to Ascham, 'I will make my mishap occasion of good to little Robin, my son's son, for whose bringing up I would gladly use your good advice. I hear you have a

son much of his age. We will club together. Point you out a schoolmaster, who, by your order, shall teach my boy and yours, and for the rest I will provide; yea, though they cost me a couple of hundred pounds a-year.'

This offer led to further talk in the queen's cabinet; talk on the nature of quick and hard wits; on the right choice of wits; on the effect of love and fear on children's minds. Sackville led the teacher to young men. Here Sackville had an object in his sight. From the due amount of freedom to be given to young gentlemen, he passed to the vexed question of learning without experience, and of experience without learning. 'What do you think of this practice of young men going to Italy?' Ascham felt shy, and wanted to hold his tongue. Italy was the dream of all young men. The poet had gone to Rome, because he was a poet; the affair had turned out badly; and his father wished to have Ascham's opinion on the policy of letting young gentlemen go to Rome. Pressed for an answer, Ascham replied, that for a young man to go into Italy, except under eye and guard of a strong tutor, was a dangerous thing. In Italy a young man learned

to like a tale of Boccacio better than a chapter of the Bible.

Ascham was called by the queen.

'Time and place,' said Sackville, coming from the window, 'will not suffer me to conclude. I pray you at your leisure put these matters into writing; the right order of teaching—and the honesty of living—for the good bringing up of children and young men.'

Ascham declined the task, but Sackville overcame his scruples. 'I heard you say not long ago, you learned of Sir John Cheke, and I myself know that you teach the queen. Now, seeing that God has so blest you, to make you the scholar of the best master, and the master of the best scholar, that ever were in our time, surely you will please God, benefit your country, and honest your own name, if you would take the pains to impart to others what you learned of such a master, and how you taught such a scholar.'

Ascham went in, and after finishing his service to the queen, he pondered over Sackville's words.

He fell to work: the 'Schoolmaster' was written and came abroad; but not before the man who ordered, and the man who wrote it, were no more.

It bore a double dedication; one by Ascham to the queen, a second by Ascham's widow to Cecil; the great sovereign and her great minister having had each some share in the production of this Windsor book.

CHAPTER XXIX.

PEACE.

1563.

ELIZABETH'S dream was peace: the peace of truth, the peace of unity, the peace of heaven.

Peace was established in the north; peace which she hoped would last, not only through her reign, but through all coming reigns. 'My policy, my alliance, my prosperity, lie in a perpetual friendship with the Scots.' Her hope was that the two peoples would become one people, the two crowns one crown. And she had cause for hope. The treaty signed by her at Windsor was already bearing fruit. Fierce passions had to cool, the after-roll of a great storm to settle down. But better feelings had been stirred, and temperate men were coming into power. No longer threatened on the Tweed, the Scots were looking towards the south as a great field for enterprise. In time these visions

came to pass. Never again was Scot and Saxon to lay waste the border land, as they had done in former times.

What she had done with her Scottish neighbours she desired to do with France. France was a moderating power, standing midway, in spirit and in site, between the threatening South and the protesting North. If unity in Christ and brotherhood in man were ever to be restored, France was the field in which a spirit of benevolence might work. But France was tortured by religious strife, and peace with one side led an ally to war with the other side. On Condé's prayer, Elizabeth landed six thousand men, under Warwick, at Dieppe and Havre, 'to serve the king.' She was to hold these ports until peace was signed, and then exchange them for Guisnes and Calais. Calais was hers by treaty-right, and four rich hostages had been given to her in bond — to hold in body and estate, as her security for five hundred thousand crowns. These men were lodged at Windsor near her person; not in tower and keep, but in free custody; free to go about, though they were not to quit her majesty's court.

Condé, as a service to his master, urged Elizabeth to retire from Havre. 'Then give me

Calais,' she replied. 'Not yet,' said Condé. By treaty Calais was to be restored, but not till four years had expired. The time was not yet up; but Condé had agreed to render both the port and pale. He was evading his own articles.

'Let him not set an example of perfidy!' exclaimed the queen, in anger. He denied that he had ever signed such articles, on which Elizabeth sent a copy of them to the queen-mother, who read them with a curled and mocking lip. Condé was fooled by Catharine de Medicis, the queen-mother, into a treacherous agreement with the king; Catharine holding before his eyes the prospect of a lieutenant-generalship of France, to be followed by a marriage with the queen of Scots.

Condé proposed to march on Havre, and drive his English friends into the sea. 'Treacherous, inconstant, perjured villain!' growled her majesty. She wanted peace with France. In friendship with each other, England and France might hold the other powers in check. Neither had much to gain by strife. 'Tell your master,' she had said to the French agent, 'that war is the game of poor devils, who have their fortunes yet to seek, not of great princes like the sovereigns of France and England.' But to gain her end—a fertile and enduring peace

—she had to stand on her defence, and speak behind her ships and regiments. 'I shall send six thousand *more* troops across the Channel,' she remarked to Quadra, 'and the French shall have the war much closer to their doors.' Clinton was fitting out his fleet; musters were pouring into Portsmouth, ready to embark. Paul de Foix, the French ambassador, was at Eton, lodging in the provost's house, waiting for the word that might bring on peace or war.

Briquemault, a favourite of Condé, came with excuses from the prince. Elizabeth refused to see him; saying that all future messages from France must come to her through Foix, the minister of Charles. Cecil kept an eye on Briquemault. He had learnt from spies that one of his objects in coming to Windsor was to see Jean Rybaud, a French mariner in the queen's service, and induce him to enter the service of his native prince. Why was that mariner singled out?

Rybaud was one of a crowd of Huguenots who had taken English pay. A skipper, plying between Dieppe and Havre, he had won the queen's notice as a bold and speculative man. He had a scheme for working on the Spanish main, to which she had listened with delight; for, after

peace with France and unity with Scotland, she was bent on founding colonies in the West. She had assisted him to buy a barque, in which he had sailed for Florida. Not having heard of Ponce de Léon, he had claimed the rights of a discoverer, landed on the shore, and planted a colony of thirty men. These men were sailors from Dieppe. Rybaud was a cunning rascal, but his doings had been watched by rogues more reckless and tenacious than himself. Stukeley, an English pirate, who had known him in the Channel, had procured two barques, intending to follow in his wake, and drive him out of his projected colony. Cecil had stayed his voyage; but one of his barques had got to sea, with orders to chase the Huguenot, burn his vessels, and sink his crews. On his return to Windsor, Rybaud was suspected and disarmed. He had found her majesty too busy for his purpose, but she kept him near her person, paying him a pension and lodgings in the house of a poor knight.

Here Briquemault found him, living under the Castle wall. The two men came to terms. Rybaud agreed to steal from Windsor, re-enter France, and carry his new colony to Charles. To prove his zeal, he was to bring with him the four hostages

for Calais—a service worth no less than five hundred thousand crowns.

In spite of their parole, the four hostages fell into his plans. Their first step was to ask the queen's permission to remove from Windsor. They were sore afraid, they said, of pestilence, and they begged her majesty's license for change of air. Cecil's suspicions were excited.

Windsor was not only healthy, but the court was staying at the Castle as the sweetest spot within thirty miles. But he appeared to listen with much sympathy to their story. If they feared the air of Windsor, they must be removed. Two of the four might go to Reading; one of them should be taken into Surrey; and the fourth should have a house elsewhere. Orders should be given. When would they like to be removed?

The last thing Rybaud wanted was to separate his men. Unless he got them off in company, he could never get them off at all. To lodge them in three distant houses was to frustrate all his plans. But they had said the word, and got an order for their march. Compelled to act at once, he made his trial, and was taken in the act of flight.

News of this failure was received in Paris with the deepest ire. Throgmorton, the English

ambassador, was seized and carried to the fortress of Vincennes. 'Eye for eye, tooth for tooth,' growled the queen-mother. Elizabeth declaimed against this outrage. An ambassador's person was held sacred in all Christian states. 'Send me Rybaud and the hostages, and you shall have Throgmorton,' answered Catharine de Medicis. In vain Elizabeth argued that the cases were not parallel. Rybaud was in her pay, and he had broken faith. The hostages were hers by treaty, and, in spite of their parole, they had tried to get away. 'Vincennes for Windsor, Windsor for Vincennes,' replied the queen-mother. 'She is Italian, I am English,' said Elizabeth: 'let us see who will give way first.'

Paul de Foix, his secretary Dubois, his butler Sebastian, and the whole of his servants, were arrested; but the queen was satisfied with putting them at Eton under the provost's charge.

Condé marched on Havre. The garrison, ready for a brush, were confident, they said, of making the 'Gallic cock cry cuck!' Warwick, whom the queen trusted as she trusted Clinton, was ready to spend the last drop of his blood before one French foot should fasten on the walls.

Elizabeth had no wish to fight. She wanted peace; but peace according to the articles already signed. She thought those articles just, and every man in England thought them just. Calais or Havre? A treaty had been signed, though in the face of natural right. Her majesty held the legal right. How was her legal right to be dismissed in favour of the natural right?

Heaven seemed to take that business up; a bitter business for the English people and the English queen.

A wave of pestilence swept through Warwick's tents; a south-west wind blew steadily in the teeth of Clinton's ships. Day after day, death rioted in the drains and alleys, striking down hundreds at a blow. Warwick fell sick; four out of his five attendants died. Companies of soldiers were reduced to squads of ten or twelve. In less than three weeks half the garrison of Havre were dead. If they could only have broken out, to die like men, instead of dropping down like dogs! No help lay near enough; but now and then a boat stole out with news for Windsor. The besiegers pressed; the food ran out; the pestilence made havoc; yet the men stood firm, unyielding to the last.

No cheer lit up the royal house, only a burning thirst for news—a strain and chafe that well-nigh burst her majesty's heart. One day she snatched a pen, and wrote:

'My dear Warwick,

'If your honour and my desire could accord with the loss of the needfullest finger I keep, so God help me in my utmost need, as I would gladly lose that one joint for your safe abode with me. But since I cannot do that which I would, I will do that I may; and will rather drink out of an ashen cup than you and yours should not be succoured, both by sea and land.'

Heaven fought against her; happily so; for peace would only have been a truce if English garrisons had rested on the soil of France. One night a boat crept in with letters, giving the commander leave to treat; on which the garrison, obeying her, retired; leaving the town choked up with dead — men who had died in honour, standing to their guns, though not as soldiers love to die.

No darker day was ever known in Windsor

than the day when leave to quit the town was signed. Her majesty's comfort lay in knowing that — the hour of bitterness once passed — a road was opened to a fertile and abiding peace with France.

CHAPTER XXX.

PROCLAIMED.

1563–4.

The day of bitterness was long, and many obstacles still blocked the road towards peace.

Defeat is hard to bear; harder for English people than for others. It is strange to us, and we are prone to visit our disasters on our chiefs. At Portsmouth the returning troops were mobbed. Elizabeth spoke out for them, saying they had done their best; and she would have her people know that no truth, no courage, no manhood, had been wanting, from the highest officer to the lowest man-at-arms.

Next day, after they had left, the weather changed, and Clinton's ships were off the bar, visible from the forts of St. Adresse. Had they but waited forty hours! Hot passions had to cool, high billows to subside.

At Windsor, where the queen still held her court, opinions were divided. Cecil was for peace; Clinton and Leicester were for war. Calais, they said, lay open to a rush. Five thousand soldiers, landing in the night among the sand dunes, might advance and turn the town, while Clinton's ships were ramming through the port. Cecil had much ado to keep these projects down.

Foix was in arrest at Eton, and Throgmorton at Vincennes. Elizabeth saw the folly of seizing enemies, and she set the queen-mother an example of moderation by freeing Foix from his restraint. But Foix was furious, and new incidents arose to feed his wrath. Stukeley, the pirate, brought in news that Rybaud's colony had failed. The sailors, left alone, had bolted from their posts. In proof of his assertion, Stukeley brought up to Windsor the chief deserter, whom his men had caught at sea trying to run his ship into a French port. This rogue was Stukeley's prisoner, and the pirate put him on his pledge; giving him leave to go about the wards and streets of Windsor, on the sole condition that he made no effort to speak with any French agent in the court. Breaking his word, he crept by night to Eton, where he had an inter-

view with Foix. Hearing of this act of perfidy, Stukeley sent for him, and thrashed him. Foix complained, and Cecil spoke to Stukeley. Stukeley justified his act, and Cecil gave him a mild rebuke. Next day Dubois, the secretary, came to the King's house, to ask what satisfaction had been made to the French captain for his injuries. 'I have seen Stukeley,' said the minister, 'and rebuked him, though his excuses were reasonably good.'

Dubois assumed a lofty tone: 'Well, sir, my master will advertise the king, who will avenge this outrage.'

'What, monsieur!' exclaimed the English minister. 'You are too hot. You speak herein but foolishly.'

'How, sir minister, you call me a fool?' inquired Dubois.

'Hem! no. Yet I tell you what I think of your words.'

Dubois bounced out of Cecil's cabinet, leaving the minister to sigh that fools like Dubois should be able to raise fresh obstacles to peace.

Foix, like Dubois, was high and rough. One night they had a quarrel with their Eton host. Day, the provost, was a favourite priest. Two years ago the queen had made him provost of

Eton ; ten months ago she had given him a canonry at Windsor. She had marked him for the deanery, and in due time for the bench. At her desire he had taken in Foix, and his servants; a lot of 'nasty fellows' whom he had lodged and fed without charging them a groat. They stole his lead from the roof; they shot his doves; they corrupted his scholars; they brought disorderly hussies to his house. On New Year's Day, Foix gave a dinner to M. Mauvissière, 'a gentle person and a good courtier,' who had come to Windsor on the part of Charles. The party sat up late; so late that the gates were locked. Foix sent a servant to demand the keys. They were refused. Dubois then went to Day's apartment, and in a haughty tone required to have the keys given up to him. 'The hour is past,' said Day: 'I cannot break the rules.' Mauvissière now came up. Day showed them the college rules, which he had sworn to keep, asking in return that they would take his doing so in good part; as he had many times told the ambassador that he must observe his rules. Dubois declared that if the keys were not produced he would smash the gates. Mauvissière drew his countryman off, and going to the back door, scrambled over the

garden wall. Dubois went back to Foix, who, heated with wine, called in his servants, and led them to the provost's door. Seizing a form, they rammed the door, when Foix rushed in, his rapier in his hand, followed by Dubois, armed also with a sword. Day, a clergyman, was seated with a little boy, one of his scholars, by the fire. In answer to their shouts, he pointed to his college rules. 'We are not bound by your rules,' cried Foix. 'Get out! get out! If others are unlodged, you shall be unlodged, this night.' They shoved the provost and his little scholar into an outer hall, where they again demanded his keys, saying they would take them by force, if they were not given up. Yielding to force, the provost sent a servant to fetch them, when the rioters marched in triumph to the gates.

Next morning two of the ambassador's servants came to complain of Day. The provost, they declared, had locked the envoy and his company in; so that, in self-defence, they had been driven to open his door by force. Cecil replied that he would send for Day; that he would hear his version of the tale; that, if the provost had done otherwise than became him, he should bear the blame. Foix's servants shrugged their shoulders,

said he was partial, and bounced from his room. Out in the ward, they met the provost coming in; at Henry the Eighth's gate they fell in with two of the provost's men. Words led to blows. Each party drew, but no great harm was done. Foix's men ran back to Cecil with a louder cry. Day was closeted with Cecil, who, on hearing of this outrage in the lower ward, sent for the knight-marshal, and bade him go down, and if he saw reason, thrust the offenders into the coal-house.

Foix, turned out of Eton, went to lodge at Colnbrook, where he had to pay his own expenses, as the English ambassadors had to do in France. Happily Mauvissière was a calmer man than Foix. On his return to Paris, the negotiations were renewed, and on the following festival of St. George peace between France and England was proclaimed in St. George's hall.

Peace being signed, Foix was invited to the feast. The hostages were released; Rybaud was cashiered. Charles was chosen of the Order of St. George, and became Elizabeth's knight.

Some of the terms of peace were bitter to her mind, and more than one of her councillors drew back; but, like a man, she gave and took, and put the fancies of her sex beneath her feet:

'I will wrap up all such with oblivion—for the sake of peace.'

Once signed, her peace was made for life. With Spain the feud went on; for truce with Spain was treason to the Protestant cause. Her struggle with the South was to continue all her reign, and to descend, through varying forms, into succeeding reigns. But, in that war of creeds, she was to reap the harvest of her self-control — the kings of France were ever afterwards her knights.

CHAPTER XXXI.

SHAKESPERE'S WINDSOR.

1595.

'Sir John Falstaff, and the Merry Wives of Windsor,' printed in the last year of Elizabeth's reign, had been produced some years before her death.

That this comedy was written by the queen's command—that it was played in her new gallery—are statements resting on good report. That she desired the painter of manners in 'Love's Labour's Lost,' and 'Much Ado about Nothing,' to describe for her the humorous side of life, as seen under her Castle wall and at her palace gate, is likely in itself, and is sustained by good traditions. That she fixed the scene and the period, is an inference not unfairly to be drawn from the surrounding facts. Left to his own devices, Shakespere had never localised a comic scene. Verona,

Ephesus, Syracuse, were cities in the clouds—anywhere, nowhere, everywhere. The people of these cities were not Lombards, Asiatics, and Sicilians. They were men; nothing but men. What cared the poet for the longitude of Olivia's garden, or the latitude of Miranda's cave? Sea-coasts of Bohemia suited his loves of Perdita and Florizel better than any cliffs near Folkestone, any sands near Hythe. Avoiding the local, he allowed his fancy to escape from the restraints of time and space. Once only, he was fettered by a theme, a name, a site: and that was when he wrote his comedy of Sir John. Strong pressure must have driven him to this course. Never before had he presented an English group, under English names, in a comic play; and, here, he had to deal, not only with English groups under English names, but he was fastened to one English town. All comers were to be the judges of his local truth, no less than of his comic art. To quit his practice, and to try a novel course, needed some power like that to which men like Bacon and Raleigh bowed.

That, in his studies for this picture, Shakespere made his eye free of the King's house and of the royal chapel, needs no evidence beyond his play.

What says his queen of the fairies, looking on the King's house from the great oak near the keeper's lodge?

> 'Search Windsor Castle, elves, within and out,
> Strew good luck, ouphes, on every sacred room,
> That it may stand to the perpetual doom,
> In state as wholesome, as in state 'tis fit,
> Worthy the owner, and the owner it.'

A noble picture, brightened by a nobler compliment; like all the poet's compliments to her majesty, worthy of the Virgin queen.

No less perfect were his sweep and glance through St. George's choir:

> 'The several chairs of Order look you scour
> With juice of balm and every precious flower.
> Each fair enstalment—coat and several crest—
> With loyal blazon evermore be blest!'

No less happy than the descriptions in Surrey's 'Elegy,' were his notes on the Garter:

> 'And nightly, meadow-fairies, look you sing,
> Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring;
> And honi soit qui mal y pense, unite
> In emerald tufts—flowers purple, blue, and white,
> Like sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,
> Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee.'

Shakespere made himself familiar with parts

beyond the King's house and St. George's choir. Street and market-place, inn-yard and water-side, hedge-row and park-fence, became to him as objects in his native town. He spotted those common fields to which the townsmen came a-birding with hawk and hound. Strolling by Datchet mead, he saw the laundresses washing in the creek. Mounting by the deer-course, he entered the Little park, noted the stand from which ladies watched the sport, and picked up legends of the hunter's death. Mixing with the crowds, not only in the streets, but in the hostelries where the strangers lodged, he caught their voices and inked their humours with a matchless certainty of ear and hand.

First, came the burghers proper, natives of the Windsor chalk. A fair-haired folk, neither keen of wit nor quick of speech, they were slow to make acquaintance; but, acquaintance being made, they proved themselves as kind of heart as they were full of fight. These natives owned the shops and kept the taverns; living in quaint houses, under hanging eaves, with garden-plots in front, and yards in rear: a vain and tattling lot, only to be stirred into curiosity by the coming and going of distinguished guests; fond of old ways, old dishes, and old songs; never so happy as when

nestling in the ingle-nook, after a day with dog and gun, drinking old ale, and whispering old legends by the sea-coal fire.

Next, came the guests and visitors of the town; sojourners of a day, a month, a year, yet striking no strong roots into the soil; men having business at the court, waiters on providence, with hopes laid up in a great man's smile; some, curious to behold a famous place, others, though fewer every year, intent on praying at the ancient shrines. Much of the glamour of St. George was gone. Our Lady of Windsor knew her place no more. Fair Geraldine slept in the chapel of master John Shorne, gentleman born. Holy Henry was forgotten; and the Very Cross was hidden out of sight. Yet visitors came to see the sanctuary of St. George. No longer a rival of Compostella and Cologne, the edifice at Windsor was the home of English chivalry; and strangers flocked to it from beyond the borders and beyond the sea.

Elbowing these natives and these strangers were the court messengers and clerks for whom no lodgings could be found inside the walls; escorts, players, hangers-on of every kind; captains in office and out of office; quacks, astrologers, alchemists, and fortune-tellers; a motley,

picturesque, and humorous extract of all English crowds.

These visitors occupied the taverns and the tavern-yards.

Windsor was a town of taverns. Facing the Castle gate stood the two chief hostelries, the White Hart and the Garter. Not far off, in Pescod Lane, stood the Antelope. Below the Hundred Steps stood the Crown; in other streets a visitor found the George, the Rose, the Cardinal's Hat, the Crossed Keys, the Swan, the King Harry, and many more; all bearing signs connected with the dynasty, the forest, and the Order of St. George. First in rank stood the White Hart, a hostelry in which peers and knights attending on the court took up their quarters for St. George's Day. Two doors off, stood the Garter, a hostelry used by country justices, by gentlemen in waiting on their lords, by messengers coming to the court with news.

No other taverns stood near the palace gates. The Crown, belonging to the dean and chapter, lay on the northern slope, handy for the choristers and chaplains having to pass between Eton college and the deanery. Two other inns stood on the roadside near the bridge. In truth, the town

appeared to be making holiday with tavern-signs.

Some of Shakespere's comrades—Spenser and Gascoigne for example—were employed as queen's messengers. When Shakespere came to Windsor, he was likely to lodge at the Garter, as the house at which queen's messengers mostly stayed. There he would make acquaintance with mine host.

A vintner was a big man in Elizabeth's time; big as a brewer in Victoria's time. He sat at table, and served his guests. His right hand was the place of honour. Hosts of the Garter and the White Hart were mayors of Windsor, swan-wardens on the river, burgesses in parliament. Mine host of the Garter was a man to take his ease, with customers great or small; and standing on his terms with every one below the dignity of a peer. He ranked with lawyers and country squires. In petty frays, not calling for the intervention of a public court, he was a man to be chosen umpire; for, as local magistrate, he was supposed to understand right and wrong, if not law and equity. Hail-fellow with the best, he was no man to bow and scrape, or wait on anybody cap in hand. To players and such riff-raff, he was likely

to be loud and curt. Why should he not? Had not his voice been heard in parliament? Had he not come in from the bench where he had been ordering rogues and vagabonds to the stocks?

Such a man was mine host of the Garter, whom, with humours broadening into farce, the poet fixed on his canvass for the stage. Perhaps mine host 'bully-rooked' Shakespere as he 'bully-rooks' Sir John. If so, the poet paid him off, in coin more durable than his milled sixpences and his shovel-boards.

Across the street, resting on the slope under Salisbury tower, stood a house two stories high, painted white in front and having a red-tiled roof. In that tenement lived a family named Ford. The tavern windows looked into their porch, and into nearly all their rooms. Here, then, as in the alleys of a Spanish town, lay elements of intrigue. Ford's wife could never step outside her door without being seen. An idler, staying at the Garter, killing time, would see her as she crossed the path —see straight into her face. If she were comely, he might notice her; if she were merry, she might return his glance. A comedy was already made.

A woman named Ann Ford was buried at

Windsor seven years after Shakespere's death. Was she the model of his merry wife?

Higher up the street, beyond the market-cross, lived a family named Page. These Fords and Pages were near neighbours, if not friends. Was Anne Ford godmother to Richard Page's daughter —sweet Anne Page?

Out in the Great park, on the road to Frogmore, lay a common, called the Fields, to which the Windsor folk repaired for sport. Here, if a comic duel should come off, would be the proper fighting ground. A lane, called Puck's lane, ran from these fields into the town. Puck was a goblin's name, and goblins were supposed to haunt the forest, in which ouphes and elves were said to caper round the trees at night. Skirting the deer-course ran Datchet lane, leading to the mead and ferry of that name; where a small brook, fed from the uplands in the forest, fell into the Thames. Up in the Little park grew Elizabeth's elms, between the deer-stand and the keeper's lodge. Close to the queen's walk stood an oak, by which a recent and romantic story hung. When the queen was yet a child, a yeoman of the forest had fallen into disgrace by hunting without leave. His name

was Horne or Herne. Some one betrayed him, and, in fear of the king's anger, he hung himself on that tree. The spot was cursed. A ghost, in figure like a stag, was said to haunt the place by night. The stag was said to butt at the trunk, and tear at the roots, while breathing from his nostrils flame and smoke.

Close by that haunted oak-tree lay a fairy dell, all green with ferns, all bright with flowers; a hiding-place for elves and sprites, in which the fairy queen was said to hold her revels, utterly unmindful of the hunter's horns.

Names, scenes, legends, were supplied to Shakespere's hand. 'Finish me this piece in fourteen days,' Elizabeth is reported to have said. In fourteen days her wish was fact; the 'pleasant and excellent-conceited comedy of Sir John Falstaff and the Merry Wives of Windsor' was produced in her new gallery with great applause.

'Sir John' was first printed in the year 1602, not many months before Elizabeth died and the Tudor epoch closed; but the comedy, so quickly written and produced, was not that perfect picture of English life now known to every reader and

spectator as the 'Merry Wives.' Both versions of the comedy were by Shakespere; but the drafts were made at different periods, and embody different states of the poet's mind. They differ like two lives.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE TWO SHAKESPERES.

1595-1601.

When 'Sir John' was first thrown off, Shakespere was living in the atmosphere of Southampton and his family traditions. A man of slowly growing thought, his views of life were still unfixed, and all his higher work was yet to come.

Some of his comedies had been acted, but the plays which were to stamp him as the first of men, were still unwritten; lying in his brain unfashioned, like a fleet in the forest, like a gallery of figures in the rock. 'Lear,' 'Hamlet,' and 'Othello,' had not seen the light; neither had 'Coriolanus,' 'Julius Cæsar,' 'Antony and Cleopatra,' seen the light. 'The Tempest,' 'Measure for Measure,' 'Troilus and Cressida,' were the fruits of higher tillage and of riper seed. The best of what

Shakespere had done, when 'Sir John' came out at Windsor, was to pale into nothingness beside the glory of what he was yet to do.

At that time Shakespere stood on his dividing lines. Except in range of poetic fancy, and in personal purity of life, he bore no special mark. Born in a sleepy town, he had walked in the old ways, read by the old lights, and taken up, as all men do, the habit of his class. Beyond his love of country—ever in the strongest natures an intense and burning passion—he had shown no sense of higher things. He seemed to have no taste for the new learning, and no sympathy for those who had borne the torch. A man of easy ways and buoyant spirits, he had caught the light things of the world as they were floating past him, and had used them for his purpose on a stage, which aimed no higher than to kindle laughter and provoke applause. Except in beauty and variety, his fancies had not differed from those of Marlowe, Greene, and Nash. Like theirs, his jests were often ribald, and, like theirs, his oaths were nearly all profane.

As yet, he was 'a Shakespere of the earth.'

What wonder that he should be, even at the age of thirty-nine? A self-made man grows

slowly, and a self-taught brain lives many lives. It lives, out-lives, and lives again. A country lad, with little schooling and a rustic manner, Shakespere had come to town, like other ardent spirits, bent on either winning fame or dying on the stones. In play-house yards he had sought for bread. Those play-house yards lay on the river bank, and in the neighbourhood of jakes and stews. The lad was in his teens. He had a wife, but she was living in that sleepy town, content to see her husband once a-year. On pushing from the yard into the play-house, he had found himself hail-fellow with a godless crew; dicers, drunkards, rake-hells, and the sluts and drabs, who crowded round a play-house door. On gaining work for his pen, he had been forced to please his masters; from the groundlings who preferred strong meat, to the comedians who knew no way of tickling laughter like an oath. Others supplied them with the texts they wanted, and the young adventurer had been drawn into their track. On all sides he had been driven to lower his flag, and to endure those stains which he compared to the stuff on a 'dyer's hand.' While writing for the stage he had to lodge near the theatre; though his neighbour on the one hand was a piper, on the other hand,

a bawd. A tavern had been his place of business, where he met his brother play-wrights ; most of them beggars on horseback ; some of them atheists, sots, spies. If ever a man were tried in fire, Shakespere, in his river-side period, had been tried in fire.

And what had issued from that burning furnace ?

Surrey, who died some years before Shakespere's birth, and Spenser, who won his bays before Shakespere came to town, had led extremely noble lives ; pure, proud, and self-denying ; living on a level hardly ever reached by saints. Fortune had helped them to be worthy of their craft. Surrey was of the highest rank, and Spenser had come of gentle race. They had no need to flatter clowns, to lodge next door to bawds and pimps. Yet neither Surrey, in the King's house at Windsor, nor Spenser, in his college rooms at Oxford, held his head above the vices of this world with a more lofty scorn than the poor poet, whose tides of fortune flung him on the river-bank. No stain had clung to him. The wits and satirists whom he had found in full possession of the stage, were anything but dainty in abuse. They called a dung-heap, dung. When

they were vexed, they scattered filth, not caring how it fell. To many men their filth stuck fast; so fast that neither blotch nor blemish can be scoured away. Marlowe, Greene, and Nash—what alkalis will ever wash these blackamoors white? Shakespere had escaped; he, and he only, had escaped. From these contentions of the mud-gods, only one came out unspotted, undefiled.

Consider that; a seeming negative; yet a fact of positive force.

Among those wits and satirists, Shakespere had won a place. That was offence. Nay, he had pushed the best among them to the wall. That was a worse offence. The insolence of his superiority was darkened, to their vision, by his birth. On stepping into their circle, he had come into the company of his betters. Marlowe, Greene, and Nash, his rivals in the theatre, were gentlemen by birth; college men, inns-of-court men, masters of arts, entitled to wear sword and gown. In their eyes, Shakespere was a rustic; only one stage higher than a clown.

They had jeered and mocked him; covering him with abuse, much as they covered each other with abuse. Yet, dropping from their pens, satire had turned to compliment. They had called each

ther drunkards, sponges, cut-throats. None of these epithets had been launched at him. Their malice had been rather critical than personal. He was an upstart, not a sot. He stole their actors from them, but he was never said to have cogged his dice, or run up scores in a comrade's name. He wore their plumes, but he was never charged with having trespassed on their hearths, with having sold their secrets to a minister of state.

The charge which had been brought against him by these rivals of the play-house was, that, in a fair field, and before good judges, he had beaten them, one and all, and broken their monopoly of the stage.

Who were these critics of the country bard, who wore no frills and had no right to draw a sword? Marlowe—sot and blasphemer; slain in trying to slay; giving up his existence for the favours of a painted slut? Greene, tipsy and in despair—crouching in his faded finery; mouthing about his sins, and choking of a surfeit like a dog? Nash—drinking in pot-house, cursing in jail, libelling everywhere; an incarnate slander, an embodied turpitude?

It would be wrong to fancy that Shakespere looks pure beside these rivals only because we

know much of them and little of him. We know more of Shakespere than of any other player, than of any other poet of his time. We know far more of Shakespere than we know of Burbage and Kemp, of Allen and Phillips. We know far more of Shakespere than we know of Marlowe and Nash, of Massinger and Ford.

Contrast may put this matter in a striking light.

Of Shakespere's mates and rivals, Spenser, beyond all measure, took the highest rank. He was of gentle birth, he went to college, he held official posts. Shakespere sprang from the soil, and neither read in college nor held a public place. Spenser was the companion of peers and princes, while Shakespere was writing on the river-bank for bread. Yet we know far less of the personal history of Edmund Spenser than of William Shakespere.

We know the town, the street, the house, in which Shakespere was born:—we know nothing whatever of the place in which Spenser was born.

We know the date of Shakespere's christening; the year, the month, the day:—we know nothing whatever of the time when Spenser was baptized.

We know the name of Shakespere's father, and

of that father's father ; of Shakespere's mother, and of that mother's mother :—we know nothing certain about Spenser's parentage on either his father's or his mother's side.

We have the names of Shakespere's brothers and sisters, and we know as much of them as any one cares to learn :—we have no record of Spenser's brothers and sisters, and are not aware that he had any brothers and sisters.

We know about Shakespere's wife, and that she was his only wife :—we know nothing of Spenser's wife or wives ; and cannot tell whether he was married more than once.

We know the fields over which Shakespere walked to court his bride ; the house in which she lived exists ; a visitor can sit in the ingle-nook where Shakespere sat :—we know nothing whatever about Spenser's courtship of his wife or wives.

We know the places in which Shakespere lived, and the spot on which he died :—little is known of the places in which Spenser lived, nor are we certain of the town in which he died.

We have a list of Shakespere's children ; we can account for the birth and death of every child : —hardly anything is known of Spenser's children, and we certainly cannot account for every child.

Finally, we have the text of Shakespere's will: —no copy of Spenser's will has yet been found.

More than enough is known of Shakespere's life to prove that no great stain lies hidden from men's eyes. Crime writes its history in black. We know enough to see that Shakespere never quarrelled in his cups; that he neither cozened his neighbours nor defamed his rivals on the stage; that no jailor acted as his go-between; that no harlot in high places hired his pen; that no women's shame lay at his feet; that no man's blood defiled his hands.

Out, from that river-side tenement—out, from that pot-house company—he emerged, and on emerging, rose. Bred, so to say, a rustic, he became a student and a gentleman. He rose, not like a rocket, but a sun. The orb was vast, and the ascent was slow. Even at thirty-nine, when 'Sir John' came out, earth clogged his pen; old modes of thought, and borrowed forms of speech; from which his intellect had not yet escaped. But he was on the verge of change.

One Shakespere perished in 'Sir John;' a second Shakespere sprang into existence with the 'Merry Wives.'

A test in evidence:

A character in the play, not represented on the stage, is that of a 'German duke.'

This German duke was Friedrich of Würtemberg, who had been to Windsor in 1592, where he had hunted in the forest, knelt in the chapel, feasted the poor knights, and been promised a vacant stall. A Lutheran prince, the Catholics hated him; and Shakespere, writing under Southampton's influence, spattered him with abuse.

Old tales of Sigismund's visit to Windsor lingered in the public mind. If Cæsar's ritters had stolen geldings and left tavern-bills unpaid, why not ascribe their rogueries to Friedrich and his Lutherans?

That Shakespere lent his pen to such abuse, is written on his page with his own hand. In his first version of 'Sir John Falstaff' he described the Lutheran prince as no better than a common cheat:

'*Caius.*—Where be my host de gartyre?

'*Host.*—O, here, sir, in perplexity.

'*Caius.*—I cannot tell vad be dad; but begar, I vill tell you van ting. Dear be a Germane duke come to de court has cozened all de host of Branford and Redding.'

Friedrich, who had been treated with the

greatest honour by Elizabeth, was depicted by Shakespere as a wayside rogue. The spite was spite, intended to give pain. Nothing in the comedy required that libel on the Lutheran prince; who had no more to do with Ford and Shallow, Falstaff and Page, than with the ouphes and elves. The prince's followers were satirised as 'garmombles' and described as thieves:

'Have a care of your entertainments; for there is three sorts of cousin-garmombles is cozen all the hosts of Maidenhead and Redding.'

At the period of his visit to Windsor, Friedrich, heir to the house of Würtemberg, had borne the title of Mümpelgart; in French, Montbeliard, in English, Momblegar. Under that name he had come to Windsor; but his signature was Würtemberg-Mümpelgart. Oddly enough, Würtemberg on the Rhine had got confused in the minds of many people with Wittenberg on the Elbe. Marlowe, in laying the scene of 'Faustus' at Wittenberg, had fallen into the mistake of fixing Wittenberg on the Rhine:

> 'I'll have them wall all Germany with brass,
> And make swift Rhine circle fair Wirtenberg.'

Shakespere, who spoke of Wittenberg in

'Hamlet,' though he spelt the name properly, said nothing of the site, and people who knew no better, stuck to Marlowe and the Rhine. Luther had begun his great reform at Wittenberg; Friedrich had come to England on behalf of that reform; wherefore Wittenberg and Würtemberg must be one. Few persons had heard of Würtemberg; a new duchy, springing into notice with the Lutheran movement; while every boy and girl who had seen a play, knew where Hamlet had studied and Faustus had sold his soul.

Shakespere had satirised the Lutheran prince as Garmomble, and described his followers as garmombles — cozen garmombles, cheating garmombles. The offence, like that of his introduction of Oldcastle as a coward and buffoon, marks the period of his service with the catholic peer. Here lies for us the interest of his early text. When his awakening came, Shakespere atoned for what had been done in his days of ignorance. He dropped abuse of Lutherans and of Germans from his play. The fun remained, the calumny disappeared. Mine host was tricked, but not by Germans: 'Germans are honest men.' The situation was reversed.

'*Host.*—Where be my horses ?

'*Bard.*—Run away with the cozeners; for so soon as I came beyond Eton, they threw me off in a slough of mire, and set spurs and away, like three Germane devils—three Doctor Faustuses.'

The poet turned his satire from the Lutheran prince to Marlowe's three devils, Faustus, Valdes, and Cornelius. Friedrich was not only dropped, but disavowed:

'*Caius.*—Where is mine host de garteere?

'*Host.*—Here, master doctor, in perplexity and doubtful dilemma?

'*Caius.*—I cannot tell vat is dat; but it is tell-a-me dat you make great preparation for a duke de Jarminy; by my trot, dere is no duke dat de court is know to come.'

The calumny was swept aside, and every particle of the abuse of Lutherans was expunged from Shakespere's text. And this was not the only evidence of change.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE MERRY WIVES.

1601-2.

SHAKESPERE'S original draft of 'Sir John Falstaff and the Merry Wives of Windsor,' was exceedingly profane.

This taint ran through his Falstaff series, first and last; but more than others, it defaced his Windsor comedy and the connecting play of 'Henry the Fourth.' In after times his texts were purified; a consequence, who can doubt, of that change of mind which led him to replace Sir John Oldcastle, martyr of free thought and pure religion, by Sir John Falstaff? Changes in his text are cardinal facts in Shakespere's life; dated and signed by his own hand.

Shakespere's earlier writings, as we find them in the quartos, were defiled by much irreverence; not more, indeed, than other men's comic writings;

but the slime was over all. Profanity seemed the language of the comic muse, and Shakespere, in his earlier plays, employed the ordinary parlance of his craft.

The comic Muse had always been a jade. In olden times, at Athens and Rome—in modern days, at Paris and Madrid—she had been equally audacious and profane. To gird at sacred things had been regarded as her license, if not as her prerogative; for the actors found on trial that when men are idling at a play, no humour moves them into merriment so quickly as irreverence. It is a weakness, lying in our nature, to lay hold of the grotesque in serious things. To see a clown beard a despot never fails to raise a laugh. A fool defying heaven, makes a more ludicrous picture still. A sense of disproportion lifts men into mirth. The puppets are so small, and the insulted powers so vast! Thus, sacred names and images became a property of the comic Muse. When wit and humour failed her, she could always raise a giggle by taking liberties with the gods.

England was no exception to the rule. Our comedy was rustic. Even when her themes were pious and her writers monks, freedoms of an

astonishing kind were taken on the stage. Our mysteries were all profane. In nearly all, the devil played a part; in which he cursed, and swore, and blasphemed—like a devil. Vice was a constant figure; Iniquity a frequent figure; and the language of these personages was in keeping with their names. Alike in mystery and morality, the stage was busy with one scene, and only one, —a struggle of fiends and angels for man's soul. The imps of darkness raved and roared in the foul idiom of the burning pit.

Thus, when Shakespere took to writing comedy, the language of the comic stage was lax and coarse. Derived from holy men, and stamped by doctors of divinity, that language was revived by laymen as a property of the craft. Nobody felt the need for change. Spectators, barren or fertile, wished to have their fun, and writers for amusement found in profanity an easy substitute for wit. Nash and Greene were great offenders. Marlowe was a worse offender. Shakespere fell into their tone. For ten or twelve years, this burthen of irreverence weighed on his genius, till, by growth of mind, he freed himself from his bad traditions, and became, in thought and phrase alike, the purest writer of his age.

These facts were written broadly in his texts.

In the first draft of 'Sir John Falstaff,' nearly all the persons of his comedy swore. Not only were Sir John, mine host, and their hangers-on profane; but the parson and the county magistrate were equally profane. Slender—timid Master Slender—was the loudest reprobate in the play; and on the stage, no doubt, this character, as first presented, was exceedingly grotesque. The ladies rapped out oaths. Anne Page alone was free from that blister of the tongue.

'God bless you, bully-rook!' cried mine host, greeting his customer, Sir John.

'Well, afore God, I must cheat!' returned the knight.

'Py Jeshu, I will knock!' said Sir Hugh; 'py Jeshu, if there pe any pody in the kitchen!'

'Nay, by God, mistress Anne,' roared Master Slender; 'afore God, a mad host;' 'Godso, here's a jest;' 'Aye, by God, that I will;' 'by God's lid;' 'nay by God, I am none of your sons.'

Quickly, as cook and seamstress, shrank from using the language of her betters; but she had her waiting-woman's 'God's pity, here comes her father.'

'God's body, here is Mrs. Page,' cried Mrs. Ford; to whom her crony answered with the greeting, 'What, in God's name?'

Oaths fell from these ladies lips like compliments. 'O God, that I knew how to be avenged!' exclaimed one lady; 'O Lord, if my husband knew!' replied the second. 'Now, in the name of God, with whom?' demanded Mrs. Ford.

So ran the original text throughout.

In the amended form of 'Merry Wives,' all these profanities were blotted out, and not a single oath remained in the text to blur the merriest of all merry plays.

These changes in Shakespere's text commenced in 'Merry Wives,' were carried into other plays. Open the second Falstaff play—the 'First Part of Henry the Fourth,' quarto 1598, folio 1623—and note the method in which Shakespere's pen ran over the original texts. I take two acts, and only two; enough to indicate the nature and completeness of the change in Shakespere's mind.

In Act First: from 'No, by my troth,' Shakespere struck out 'by my troth;' from 'by the Lord, lad, thou mayst love,' he struck out 'by the Lord;' from 'by the Lord, I'll be a base judge,' he struck out 'by the Lord;' from ''s blood,

I am as melancholy as a gib cat,' he struck out ' 's blood ;' from 'I would to God thou and I knew,' he struck out ' to God ;' from ' by the Lord, an' I do not, I am a villain,' he struck out ' by the Lord ;' from 'zounds, where thou wilt,' he struck out ' zounds ;' from ' not I, by my faith,' he struck out ' by my faith ;' from ' by the Lord, I'll be a traitor then,' he struck out ' by the Lord ;' Hotspur's ' by God, he shall not have a Scot,' he replaced ' by God ' with ' heaven ;' from ' 's blood, when you and he,' he struck out ' 's blood;' in ' I have done i' faith,' he replaced, ' i' faith ' by ' in sooth.'

In Act Second : from ' by the mass, there is near a king,' he struck out ' by the mass ;' from ' God's body, the turkeys in my pannier,' he struck ' God's body ;' from ' I know a trick worth two of that, i' faith,' he struck out ' i' faith ;' from ' yet, zounds, I lie,' he struck out ' zounds ;' from ' 's blood, I'll not bear my own flesh so far,' he struck out ' 's blood ;' from ' zounds, will they not rob me,' he struck out ' zounds;' in ' zounds, an' I were by this rascal,' he replaced ' zounds, an', with ' by this hand ;' in ' in faith, I'll know your business, Harry,' by ' in sooth;' and ' in faith, I'll break thy little finger, Harry,' by ' indeed;' 'by

the Lord, so they call me,' he erased; from 'zounds, ye fat paunch,' he struck out 'zounds;' from 'by the Lord, I'll stab thee,' he struck out 'by the Lord;' in 'pray God you have now murdered,' he replaced 'God' by 'heaven;' from 'by the Lord, I knew ye,' he struck out 'by the Lord;' from 'but by the Lord, lads,' he struck out 'by the Lord;' from 'O Jesu, my lord the prince,' he struck out 'O Jesu;' from 'by'r lady, you fought fair,' he struck out 'by 'r lady;' from 'not a whit, i' faith,' he struck out 'i' faith;' from 'O Jesu, this is excellent sport,' he struck out 'O Jesu.'

Only one oath was left by Shakespere in his text. Falstaff had said:

''S blood, my lord, they are false. Nay, I'll tickle ye for a young prince, i' faith.'

Prince Henry had answered:

'Swearest thou, ungracious boy? Henceforth, ne'er look on me.'

An oath by Sir John was necessary for the prince's grave rebuke; but Shakespere took away the grossness of his oath by omitting ''s blood.'

Have we not here strong indications of a change in Shakespere's mind? These were no touches of the pen,—mere filings of a riper art.

His purging of the text has the appearance of a penitential act. Not only were offensive terms cast out, but in the evolution of 'Sir John' into the 'Merry Wives,' the moral of the story rose in height. In the first draft, Sir John was not forgiven and reconciled. The charities of mirth were lost; the laughter rang in vain; the puppets ended with a commonplace revenge. A riper wisdom came with years. The teacher taught the lessons he had learnt. Says Mrs. Page:

> 'Good husband, let us every one go home,
> And laugh this sport o'er by a country fire;
> Sir John and all:'

not to rejoice in the old sinner's burns and pinches, but to crown a merry day,—a day that never had a spice of serious mischief,—in the cheer of an English fire, the fellowship of an English board. That charity is the moral of the 'Merry Wives.'

A Shakespere of the earth had risen into a Shakespere of the heavens.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

GOOD QUEEN BESS.

1602–3.

Windsor was the study, playground, house of rest, and throne of state, to Good Queen Bess.

Hither for the forty-five years of her reign she came up to feast and rest, to hold her days of festival, to repose in her fatigue, and to recover from her ailments on the breezy crest. In the Tudor tower she loved to write, and in the Little park to ride and hunt. 'She readeth here at Windsor more Greek every day,' wrote Ascham, 'than some prebendaries of this church read Latin in a week.' So it was in the chase: 'The queen's majesty, being abroad hunting yesterday in the forest,' wrote Dudley to her primate, 'and having had good hap, she hath thought good to remember your grace with part of her prey, and so commanded me to send you from her high-

ness a great and fat stag, killed with her own hand.'

Under her windows lay the scarp, an unkempt drop of earth and stones, falling abruptly from the castle towards the river brink. A bridle-path led from the Private stair, above the deer-course, towards the Little park, which she entered by a tressle bridge, a winding, unsafe path, held up with planks and rails. Elizabeth shored the chalk, levelled the road, arched the steep dips, replaced the tressle bridge by arches, and the wooden rails by parapets of stone. This terrace bore, and bears, Elizabeth's name.

Delighting in the open air, she planted a double row of elms, near the keeper's lodge, and close by Herne's oak, an avenue still known as Queen Elizabeth's walk.

On finishing these outer works she renewed the keep and threw a gate across Castle hill; a gate which stood across the road, till it was taken down by George the Fourth. She built a banqueting house, repaired the private chapel in St. George's hall, and made her Constable a lodging in the Norman tower. Not the least notable of her additions was the gallery connecting the Tudor tower with the Inner gate.

Until the middle of her reign, the King's house had no covered way into the keep. The old King's house communicated through the Devil's tower; but on the northern side, where Edward the Third had built his house, the edifice ended with King John's tower. A curtain and a rampart were the only links between the keep and the Tudor tower. Elizabeth threw a gallery across the open space; and in that gallery set up a theatre, and saw the dramas of her time performed, from Sackville's 'Ferrex and Porrex,' to Shakespere's 'Merry Wives.'

This gallery is intact. A carved stone on the north front, bears the queen's initials and the date:

E. R.

1583.

It was a memorable date: that of Raleigh's first visit to the queen at Windsor; when he first proposed to her his plans for wresting the dominion of the sea from Spain and offering her an empire in the west. He had begun to found Free States, and in the happy name of Virginia, had come to lay them at her majesty's feet.

This terrace and this gallery were connected

with the best things in her reign—the balm of peace no less than the pomp of war. Her court was like her mother's, an assemblage of the brightest wits, the soundest scholars, and the sweetest singers. In her mother's court Shaxton had met Latimer, Surrey had found Wyat, Morley had broken jests with Rochester. Men of their day, they were the greatest in their several kinds; but learning, wit, and song, were all advancing with rapid strides. 'Many ladies,' wrote Ascham, 'now surpass Sir Thomas More's daughters in all kinds of learning.' Their example was at Windsor. 'But the brightest star among them is my Lady Elizabeth.' As with women, so it was with men; the age was one of giants. On Elizabeth's terrace, Savile heard Parker discourse, Ascham talked Greek to Sydney, and Spenser recited eclogues to Gray. Here, Walsingham brooded on policy, Bacon expounded science, and Shakespere studied life. Here Raleigh fired all hearts by his adventures on the Spanish main.

Elizabeth had her portion of poetic fire. Her father and her mother both wrote verse, and set their lines to music. Rochford, her uncle, was a sonneteer; Surrey, her second cousin, was founder of a school of song. Some of the foremost poets

of her day were nigh to her in blood. Morley and Sackville were of her kin. Sydney was one of her connexions. All the great tribe of singers claimed to be her servants, and they one and all regarded her as their patroness. If Shakespere paid his 'imperial votaress' higher compliments than his brethren, it was not because he loved and valued her more than others, but because his power of saying what he meant was greater than the rest.

> 'She shall be
> A pattern to all princes. . . . Truth shall nurse her,
> Holy and heavenly thoughts still counsel her,
> She shall be feared and loved.
> God shall be truly known, and those about her
> From her shall read the perfect ways of honour.'

Elizabeth was a despot; a parental and beneficent despot. On coming to the throne she had found her country like her castle. Parts were old, and those were very strong. New parts had grown beside the old, but had not mixed with them. The circulation was incomplete. Many of her gentry, citizens, and burgesses, held beliefs at variance with the ancient peers and with the clowns who ploughed their land, and followed them to the camp. Extremes beget extremes. Each side ab-

horred the other. Blood was up: with scent of burning in the air. Each party yearned to hang and head, to fire and drown, their rivals, who had other views about the bread and wine. Elizabeth had been forced to curb these sects; yet she had never ceased to be a popular queen. Such strength as she acquired was of the soil. Even when her rule was stern, men saw that it was safe. No peril ever blanched her cheek, unstrung her nerves, turned back her feet. She met the armaments of Philip like a veteran in camps; the conspiracy of Essex like a lady at a play. If trifles pleased her, as they please and vex all women, when the drums were out she vaulted to her roan jennet. If she was much a woman, she was not the less a queen. In dropping at her knee, the greatest of her servants felt that they were bending to an incarnation of their country and their race. Elizabeth was England, wearing alike her rose and crown.

During her reign of forty-four years, the land was blessed by peace and victory; by peace at home, by victory abroad. Within that term she saw the butcheries of Alva drive the Dutch burgesses into emigration and revolt; the atrocities of St. Bartholomew avenged by a civil war; the

intolerance of Cæsar waste the finest provinces of Germany; and Spain, the mother of all mischief, driven from the seas and stript of her dependent states. Whilst kindling Munster into flame, Spain had launched armadas on the English coast; but those Irish fires and those Spanish fleets had but helped to bring out the reserves of patriotic force. The fires burnt out, the armadas sank. Elizabeth rolled the tide of invasion from her shores. At Cadiz, in Brabant, she proved the mettle of her people. She upheld the Evangelical League, and gave her arms, her money, and her counsel to the North.

Yet the charm of Elizabeth's reign was that of a victorious peace. A hundred signs—plain as the Tudor tower and Elizabeth's terrace—spoke of a stage of life being reached and passed. The forms of government, like the walls and towers of Windsor, were still feudal; but the currents flowing within those forms, like the halls and galleries of the King's house, were free.

England, like Windsor, had been opened to the light. New men were at the board and at the helm. Cecil and Egerton sat in the seats of Pole and Gardiner. Raleigh and Effingham ruled the seas. Science was lifting up her voice; poetry was speaking in a thousand tongues. Law was

asking for a code; commerce was turning towards the east and towards the west. Learning, taking leave of cloisters, was appearing in the world. Bacon was framing his New Organ; Shakespere was presenting his dramas; Raleigh was planting his Free States.

Elizabeth passed away in peace; her end attained, her policy fulfilled. Hundreds of voices rang in praise of her glorious life: the greatest louder than the rest: yet Bacon said most truly, 'The true commender of this lady is time.'

By her the island kingdoms were united, not like Portugal and Spain, by violence, but by sacrifice—the noblest of all sacrifices, that of self. Her work remained when she was gone; the country left by her became an empire of the sea, a nursery of liberal states.

That is the epitaph on Good Queen Bess.

END OF THIRD VOLUME.

LONDON:
Printed by STRANGEWAYS & SONS, Tower Street, Upper St. Martin's Lane.